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The freedom of authority







THE FREEDOM OF AUTHORITY

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

STUDIES IN HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

With Appendix on Christian Unity in America  
and the Historic Episcopate

REASON AND AUTHORITY IN RELIGION

With a critical review of *Lux Mundi* and Dr.  
Martineau's *Seat of Authority in Religion*

THE ETHICS OF HEGEL

Translated Selections from his *Rechtsphilosophie* with  
an introductory exposition

THE  
FREEDOM OF AUTHORITY

*ESSAYS IN APOLOGETICS*

BY

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O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom; Defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>1</sup>

“Really every genuine law is a liberty: it contains a reasonable principle of objective mind; in other words it embodies a liberty.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Collect from Prayer Book.

<sup>2</sup> Hegel's *Philosophie des Geistes*, § 539.

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## PREFACE

These current discussions of contemporary themes and thinkers are Essays in Apologetics. Apologetics is the philosophical defense or justification of Religion. It aims at vindicating the concrete rationality of the religious side of humanity's life. It attempts a critical refutation of all antagonistic world-views. It meets them in the open, on purely intellectual grounds, as to what is the most rational world-view—one that excludes and invalidates religion, or one that includes and validates it.

The volume is a series of *Studies*, rather than a sustained thesis. Yet there runs through them all, the contention that nature and man are known truly, only when they are viewed as a process of objective Mind, realizing itself afresh in and through empirical conditions.

Its fundamental object is to maintain the reasonableness of a man of modern culture frankly and earnestly worshipping in some form of "authoritative religion"—in any form, rather than in no form.

Hence the persistent polemic against the "mechanical view" of the universe. This merely mechanical *interpretation* of Nature and man and his institutions is a metaphysical perversion of the mechanical theory, properly used in Science. It is not Science, but the bad metaphysics of some men of Science. It is the metaphysics of *Naturalism* and of rigid mechanical determinism, in which there can be no worthy place for the humanities. These Essays seek a world-view in which Art and Religion and Philosophy are seen to have valid functions for human weal. The merely Scientific man, the man whose world-view is merely

that of mechanical Science—the undevout astronomer, or geologist,—is mad. Only the devout man is fully sane.

The use of the dialectic method will be noted. First statements, though put dogmatically, are not final ones. Criticism follows to show their patent limitations, and thus force them into more concrete forms.

The book may be too semi-technical for popular readers, and too semi-popular for technical readers. The *odium Theologicum* may sometimes seem to swamp the philosophic calm, in the author's interest in such verities as God, Freedom and Immortality. The mixture of metaphor with the dialect of philosophy, and the appeal to men's moral and religious needs, as against the regnant naturalism of a metaphysical Science, may be faulted. And yet we dare believe that there is a bit of real logic throughout the volume.

Certain truths having become axioms in philosophy like certain principles in mathematics, constantly applied, repetitions of these axiomatic realities had necessarily to be made throughout the book without adducing constant cross references.

The larger part of the book was written *aus einem Gusse*, in a heat, almost at a sitting, and must suffer for the faults of all such composition.

At least the author can say, *liberavi animam meam* on some vital topics of the time. He sends the volume forth with the hope that it may help liberate some fellow-men from bondage to a godless world-view, and lead some others from the capriciousness of individualism, into that objective service of God, which is perfect freedom.

He has to thank his colleague, Professor Hermann Schönfeld for his valuable assistance in reading and correcting the final proof of the whole volume.

J. MACBRIDE STERRETT.

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY,  
Washington, D. C., January, 1905.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE FREEDOM OF AUTHORITY

"Whoso would be a man must be a non-conformist." This dictum of Emerson in his *Sturm und Drang* period cannot be taken seriously. Taken literally in England, it would mean the exclusion of King, Archbishops, the clergy and the laity of the Church of England from the category of manhood. Taken seriously anywheres, it would mean the denial of manhood to all men of good manners. The good-mannered man is the one who conforms to the manners, or morals (*mores*, ἠθικά, *Sitten*) of his tribe, set, community, station and institutions.

It would mean that one must decivilize, desocialize himself—fanatically attempt not to be like other men. My set, people, church believe and behave so and so. I must behave unlike them and thus finally ostracise myself from all relations to my fellow men in order to be a man. My good fellow citizens obey the laws, I must be an anti-nomian. My church believes in the Apostles' Creed and has a prescribed form of worship. I must deny the creed and decry the cult. I must be a veritable Ishmaelite and heed "the call of the wild" against "the call of the tame."

But what quality of manhood remains in one as a non-conformist? "No tribe, nor state, nor home hath he." Self-schism'd from all of his kind by his *un-kindness*; unformed by all his non-conformity, he must be as Aristotle said, "either a beast or a god." He would be even less than a beast. For beasts are like their kind, conform to their type, physically and

psychically. "Insist on yourself, never imitate," says Emerson again in his essay on *Self-reliance*. And again, "I hope in these days we have heard the last of conformity and consistency. Let the words be gazetted and ridiculous henceforward." Emerson must have meant that the *perfect* man should be a non-conformist to the manners of imperfect men. A Jesus must not conform to the creeds and deeds of the Pharisees and Sadducees—hypocrites. This is evident from the transcendental lines prefixed to a previous essay:—

"I am the owner of the spheres,  
Of the seven stars and the solar year,  
Of Cæsar's hand and Plato's brain,  
Of Lord Christ's heart and Shakspeare's strain."

Such a cosmopolitan man is more like a god. Such an uncommon man may stand, as he further says, before every custom and law and say: "Under this mask did *my* Proteus nature hide itself." I am the universal-human. *Nihil humani alienum a me puto* and so I am a man because I am a conformist. I can only be a non-conformist to imperfect forms, because I have been conformed to those of the universal-human. I, as a cosmopolitan, may slight provincial customs. But I have become a cosmopolite by being a conformist to the manners of all provinces. I can be a non-conformist only after and because I have become a *conformed-ist*. I have, Emerson virtually says, conformed to the type of perfect manhood and therefore I can non-conform to imperfect forms of the type. "The oversoul" is *my* soul. In me is a greater than me, that is, my *real* me. It is God that is my real self, and God cannot be conformed to anything but Himself. Thus Emerson's non-conformist turns out to be a god, rather than a beast. What he means, if anything more than a striking expression is intended, is that the man who has become a real man by conformity to the perfect law of the universal-human, must non-conform to the manners, customs, morals of the imperfect human. In other

words he meant to say that: Whoso would be a man must be a conformist.<sup>1</sup>

So says biology in its law of conformity to type. So says psychology, pedagogy, morality, religion and philosophy. So, too, says history. No form of organized society—from the tribal to the republican, from the lowest to the highest form of social, moral or religious society has any place for the mugwump, or non-conformist. Ostracism is always the penalty. The non-conformist is always at most a re-formist. He can be a non-conformist only because he has been transformed to some other form. Non-conformity is thus often the highest type of moral and religious conformity. The non-conformists of England have had their moral nobility only by virtue of their conformity to a higher type of Christianity than that which they found about them.

It was the moral and religious imperfection of the Church of England that made their non-conformity possible because of their conformity to higher religious ideals. Yes, it is often true that to be a man—a typical man—one must often be a non-conformist to the customs of degenerates. *Degenerates* means, in fact, those who have lost the qualities proper to the *genus* or kind of mankind.

Isolate the child of cultured parents from all human intercourse. Let him be a private, subjective, uneducated potential man. You cannot take away from him the heredity that enters into his idiosyncrasy. But he is as nearly as possible unspoilt by the tyrants of domestic, religious, intellectual and moral authorities. No mother-tongue tyrannizes his speech—if speech he have. He is a private individual so far as that is possible. Let him then be cast into the desert, away from the shackles of civilization. Let him be nurtured by a wolf. Anthropomorphize his animal companions as much as Kipling or

<sup>1</sup>Thus Emerson in speaking of the true scholar says, "the truth is this: Every man I meet is my master in some point, and in that I learn of him."

Seton Thompson do. Let him be a Mogli. Still, "persistence of type" will keep him enough conformed to the human, to prevent his becoming wholly a beast, while his conformity to his bestial environment will keep him from becoming much of a man.

By patent analysis every avowed non-conformist can be shown to be nine-tenths a conformedist. Heredity and environment have done their ineffaceable work upon him. He is full of prejudices—*pre-judgments* of ancestors and fellowmen.

An unprejudiced judgment is a psychological impossibility. It is only important that one's pre-judgments be good and true, normal and objective, rather than whimsical, peculiar, abnormal and subjective.

But if his judgments are so largely pre-judgments, prejudices imbibed from ancestry and his social, ethical environments, where is his distinctively private judgment? Where is what is termed his individuality?

Analysis shows this to be largely an *idiosyncrasy*, a peculiar blending of hereditary and environing traits. He never was an individual in the abstract sense, *i. e.*, as being *abstracted* from all such determining elements. He was not so when first abstracted from his mother's womb. Then the mother's love and the family *ethos* bathed and permeated, and together with the *ethos* of society, church and school made him a man among men. Hence his private judgment is always based upon objective, social judgments. Otherwise the right of private judgment becomes the wrong of misjudgment to society, which punishes him accordingly, and a wrong to his own human nature which is self-retributive. In all this, too, he had been and still is under *authority*. Conformity and authority are correlatives.

And here we have another bug-bear term—*authority*. The freedom of authority is an antinomy, and an unresolved antinomy is an insult to reason. The human spirit will not brook it. Where it cannot solve the antinomy by rising to a higher



point of view, it will make a practical solution—will cut the Gordian knot.

To speak of the freedom of authority may seem to some like discoursing on the whiteness of blackness. Kant's statement of some antinomies is classical. He denied the possibility of any rational solution of them. His critical solution of them left us with the unresolved dualism between phenomena and noumena. Later philosophy multiplies the antinomies—finds that in every object or idea there is difference as well as identity. All that is needed to make an antinomy is to emphasize the difference and neglect the identity. To solve, it is to see the unity *in* and through the difference, as is done in Burns' line "A man's a man for a' that." To make a bug-bear of authority, as fatal to freedom, seems like a belated survival of a worked-out and thought-out antinomy. The scientific, historical and philosophical spirit and methods are all beyond the abstractions on which this antinomy is founded. And yet it lingers on in robust form—an encysted, but lively corpse in the cosmic thought of the twentieth century. In no spheres of life is this *survival* more pronounced in our day than in those of morals and religion. Napoleon remarked to Laplace that he could not find any mention of the Creator in his *Mécanique Céleste*. "Sire," said Laplace, "I had no need of any such hypothesis." So say some of authority in morals and religion—"Sirs, there is no need of that hypothesis in describing true religion."

The author of one of the most significant and brilliant works on religion<sup>1</sup> quotes approvingly the tempestuous claim of *Vinet*, whom he styles the great prophet of the religion of the spirit in our age and country: "That which I absolutely repudiate is authority," and adds, "the time has come, it seems to me, for those who have broken with authority in their inner life, to break definitely with it in their theology."

But we are told that the right of private judgment was the

<sup>1</sup> Auguste Sabatier, *Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit*, p. 283.

essential characteristic of the Reformation, and that this meant the repudiation of all authority in religion. It need scarcely be said that this has not been true of Protestantism, except in that of some who have departed far from its substantial principles and historical forms. Such writers demand a suspense of judgment in religious matters till they can be approached simply as an unbiased intellectual study. To do this they should be kept from all authoritative religious education, as John Stuart Mill was by his father.

Authority may be defined as the power or influence through which one does or believes what he would not of his own unaided powers. Authorities are all presumably rightful. That lies in the very significance of the term. It is a personal relation between the wiser and better and those less wise and good. Society's judgment as to who are the wisest and best is expressed in the form of laws. Laws are authorized. The personal is never wholly absent from any form of authority. Its function is to enable individuals to attain a higher development than they could by their own unaided powers. This mediation is primarily through the collective reason and beliefs and customs of mankind and the individuals. Ultimately all authority must be seen to be invested in God, "whose service is perfect freedom." Speaking of it mediately, it is the power or influence conferred by wisdom, character, office and station. Its fundamental idea is that of law. Law is a rule of conduct to an end. That end is always the well being of those upon whom it is imposed. Primarily objective, its aim is to make itself subjective in its subjects, so that it may be seen to be their own law—the law of their own nature. But it becomes to one a law of his own nature through custom and conformity—the law of his *educated* nature—his nature converted into substantial manhood through conformity to the authorities which surround him from the cradle to the grave. Thus authority is the right of the species man over its individuals; and conformity is a duty of the individual to his set. It is this con-

formity that makes him a *generic* man. And thus it becomes his right, his good, the means of his being elevated to the grade of manhood.

Authority has its roots in the organic conditions of all forms of life and of good living. It is the pedagogue to whom all must always go to school. It is a necessary function of the species for its own preservation. As tradition, it is the bond of generations transmitting the accumulated heritage of the ages. Every form of society naturally and necessarily begets generic traditions, customs, beliefs, constitutions and by-laws which are authoritative for all its members. The society which is without them cannot remain a society. That which has no such organic past can have no continuing present. "Institutions," it has been said, "are the lengthening shadow of man." That is too feeble a simile. Say, rather, institutions are the lengthening and strengthening of the stature of man. Civilized men are civilized men only through institutions. Man is by nature—that is, by his educated nature—an institutional being, or as Aristotle said, "a political animal." And generic constitutions always imply authority, conformity and, through these, real concrete freedom or self-realization. Law, authority is fundamental and final and freedom is in and by means of law.

But authority for man is always ultimately personal, and its aim is to enrich individuals by fulfilling them. Being personal it implies trust, confidence and obedience. Its function is its sufficient credential. It educates and sustains individuals. The individual cannot become a man except by conformity, as "the branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine" as a member. So we return to conformity as the necessary means of self-development. Authorities may sometimes seem external and obedience forced, but all *education* goes on under these principles. "One is *always* somebody's child." The man not less than the child and the race not less than man is always under authorities, which can be traced to the One Supreme personal authority "whose service is perfect freedom." Educa-

tion is the influencing of person by person, to the end of the self-realization of the one influenced. It is the shaping of the individual to his civilized environment, so that rational habits and views—that is, the views and habits of his institutions, may take the place of mere caprice. It is erroneous to say that “education is the development of the theoretical and practical in the individual,” as if it were only an *educing* of what is *already* within, like shelling so many peas from a pod. Education is not merely an *exegetis*. It is rather an *induction*—a conveying a fullness into an emptiness. It is a conversion, a regeneration of the merely natural man of babyhood. Apart from heredity and *idiosyncrasy*, if there is anything peculiar, it is bad *un-kind*, and needs extirpation rather than *education*, for the good of the individual and society. The child, as Hegel says, “as a potential man is only subjective or negative.” His first nature must be converted into a second rational ethical nature, so that these become his second and true nature. Pedagogy is the art of making man ethical. It seeks to permeate him with the *ethos*, intellectual, moral and religious of his people. To a father seeking the best way to bring up his son, a Pythagorean, or some other philosopher, replied, “make him a citizen of a state which has good laws.” And by the state, Aristotle and Hegel mean the whole social organism—family, school, church, society, as well as government. Let him conform to these institutional authorities if he would become a good and wise man. Let him conform his vocalization to the *common* language; his reasoning to the common laws of thought; his knowledge to the common fund of science, art, literature and philosophy; his devotional exercises to the common cult of his church, and his conduct to the ethical codes, customs and manners of his people, that he may attain to the stature of manhood.

The imperishable Greek ideal of education was not merely that of drawing out but also that of a putting in. And it was to be put in by line upon line and precept upon precept and example upon example, and custom upon custom—that is, as



Aristotle taught, by *habituation* to the objective, generic, and concrete wisdom and morals of the institution. During the process there is thus a species of *self-enstrangement* for the natural—the uneducated man, but its end is self-realization or the cultured moral man. All knowledge, all manners are foreign to the child. But familiarity with them removes their foreign air, and they become flesh of his flesh and spirit of his spirit—a second, *regenerated* nature. And as the process never ceases but with senility or death, one's regeneration is never quite completed. Literal school days do not end the conformity that educates. "One is *always* somebody's child." The wisdom and experience of his fellowmen and of the institutions of which he is a member are always objective concrete authorities. Without me there is always a greater than me, unless I have with Emerson become the owner of "Lord Christ's heart and Shakespere's strain," and the "over soul" has become my own soul. Not till then will the right of the distinctively, peculiar private judgment be aught but mis-judgment. And in the process one's judgment is of worth only so far as it conforms to public universal judgment, intellectual or moral. And when it is right and good, it is so in virtue of its *not* being one's *private* judgment. The *Lehrjahre* always run through the *Wanderjahre* and even the *Meisterjahre* are years of *Lehrjahre*. Education is unending for the *living* man and it is always under authorities.

But what place, we ask again, is left for freedom and individuality? Let us say briefly, and then try to see later on that in this process of education, freedom and individuality are being truly realized.

We note the strange tendency of man to think in transcended forms of thought—to stand on overcome-standpoints. Men grow zealous and fight for old gods when they have thought themselves to new and higher ones. It is a species of intellectual and moral *ataravism*. It is a recrudescence of the old Adam, which is often too strong for the new Adam in us,—to

put it in religious way. Men of science who hold the strictly mechanical view of the universe, will often argue in terms of tetology and freedom. Or having passed beyond crude materialism to the higher category of force as a system of forces, they will argue from the standpoint of matter as the ultimately real. Or having accepted evolution, they will argue as if there were no teleology. Life is still a higher category and yet they will often subordinate life to conceptions of the inorganic. Illustrations in morals and religion also are abundant. Men, like the Jews of old, believe in and fear Jehovah and yet worship their old idols. In religion, the Methodists call it *back-sliding*. In thought and action it is inconsistency.

There is a whole nestful of eighteenth century conceptions—conceptions of the *Eclaircissement*, *Aufklärung* or rationalism, that have lived and fought through the nineteenth century, in spite of the accepted, historical method and the regnant conception of evolution. These are the abstract conceptions of *reason*, *freedom*, *individuality* and a generally static view of all things as separate and distinct, the universe being a collection of independent beings and things with no *essential* relations between them. In all human organizations the individual is the real. And the individual is an independent atom, impervious to foreign emigrations, a substantial unit, a microcosmic monad. These monads, as Leibnitz said, “have no windows through which anything might go in or out of them.” No sponging is therefore possible or desirable. Each one being like a separate world, is “sufficient for itself, independent of every other creature, enveloping the infinite, expressing the universe and as durable, self-subsistent and absolute as the universe itself.” This pluralistic view of the universe as a collection of many eternal and independent beings has its revival in the views of Professor James, Professor Howison, Professor Schiller and the authors of the volume of essays entitled “*Personal Idealism*.” This eighteenth century view was practically a revival of nominalism against a second growth of realism in thought and

institution. It was the principle of criticism used against all constituted authorities. The illuminated, enfranchised individual was in duty bound to summon before his private tribunal for evaluation all the accepted creeds, cults and institutions. The German name for this age is the *Aufklärung*—the *clearing up*, which Schelling happily characterized as an *Ausklärung*—a *clearing out*.<sup>1</sup>

*Cui bono* it asked of church and state and art and religion and every form of social organization. Does it, judged by the private reason of the private person, pay to belong to, to submit to any of these so called authorities? If not, then away with them from my universe. All organic unities—family, state, church, were looked upon as unities only in the sense of being collections or aggregations of independent individuals, formed by social contact for the enlarged happiness of the individual members. Never was there an age which was so sure that it had reached the ultimate point of view. The oftentimes arrogance of the modern scientific view of the world pales before that of *the Illumination*. Reason was late born, but it had finally been born, full-fledged in their day and would henceforth rule the world. After us the deluge, was the cry. Each man was to be his own Moses and his own Christ. The Sinai was within and the Golgotha too, so far as any need of a cross was recognized. "Thus would I speak, if I were Christ," are the words that Goethe put into the mouths of one of these rationalists, in characterizing the arrogant self-conceit of this phase of thought.

Thus measured, all institutions of civilized life were found wanting, and so Rousseau made his "call to the wild" from the call of the tame—"Back from civilization and artificiality to nature and the freedom of the woodland." In a word it was the assertion of the infinitude of the finite self—the deification of the individual as in modern pluralism. Some of the representatives of the modern form of this individualistic polytheism seem to be jealous of God—would fain banish Him, or reduce Him to being

<sup>1</sup> Cf. my *Ethics of Hegel*, p. 20, for further characterization.

at most *primus inter pares*, lest He should tamper with the sacred rights of individuals. These are, by nature, as eternal and independent as God Himself. All are gods.

In the eighteenth century form, freedom from all forms of social and institutional authorities was proclaimed. The evils of man were held to be due to society. The individual could only reach perfection by being freed from all restraint and allowed to follow his own natural instincts. All relations between individuals were looked upon as artificial, made by compact, and in no way constitutive of them. Hence dissent became the rule and conformity the exception.

It may be well, at this point, to differentiate the principles of this "Age of Reason" from those of Protestantism, inasmuch as many falsely identify them. It is possible indeed for Sabatier to style himself a Protestant,<sup>1</sup> after he has given much space to show that *historically* Protestantism, at least up till his day and to a few choice liberal souls, has always had its authoritative standards for its individual members. Indeed in his second work,<sup>2</sup> he classifies Protestantism along with Romanism under "Religions of Authority" and gives a most drastic criticism of historical Protestantism which is only equalled by that of Dr. Martineau.<sup>3</sup> Both of these writers err in holding that Protestants placed authority in a paper-pope, as the Bible has been stigmatized, and not recognizing too, that, historically, Protestants have also placed authority in their churches. They have all, always and everywhere, held to the Apostles' Creed, with its article, "I believe in the holy Catholic Church."

But for the point at issue—the right of the private judgment of the individual. Protestants have always claimed the right of *personal conviction*, but also that the right of private judgment is the right of judgment based upon the Scriptures and creeds of the church—upon the testimony of the Spirit as authorita-

<sup>1</sup> Sabatier's *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion*, p. 222.

<sup>2</sup> Sabatier's *Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit*.

<sup>3</sup> Martineau's *Seat of Authority in Religion*.

tively communicated to the individual, not by a paper-pope, but by holy and inspired men and writers and most fully by the personal Christ. Throughout, too, they had the conception of a kingdom of whose principles these persons were the authoritative exponents. Historically—that is—as a matter of fact, the fundamental doctrines of Protestants have been :

(1) The will of God revealed through the divine institutions and inspired men of holy Scriptures, as the authoritative rule of faith and practice.

(2) Justification by faith alone, through the divine grace, mediated by the Holy Scriptures and the Christian community.

(3) The universal priesthood of believers.

Protestantism never contended for, nor allowed the right of mere private judgment in any of its churches. It has insisted upon personal conviction. It has asserted the supreme value—not of the individual, but of the Christlike person. It has always condemned to final punishment, in terms lurid or gentle, sensuous or spiritual, according to the prevailing culture of the times—all individuals whose private judgment and life were not in accordance with the Word of God. The *absolute* value of the individual in hell—make that as unsensuous as you please—is *not* an *absolute* value of any worth. It means alienation from the *Kingdom* of God, the Church triumphant. That is, it is the *kind* of an individual that has worth—the individual that has been realized as a member of the Kingdom. It is true that some self-styled *liberal* Christians in a number of our churches think and act under the principles of “the age of reason,” and talk to their flock about the liberty of every man’s thinking as he pleases about the doctrines of their respective churches. The epithet *liberal* is not modest. And their talk about “a religion for this age,” or “the Church of the future” for which they stand, does not make for the edifying of the *religious* nature of men, as it is generally intellectual rather than devotional. They represent only eddies in the great stream of the life of their churches.

Protestants protested against the *abuses* and *corruptions* of



the Church—protested against the decision of the *Diet of Spires* (A. D. 1529) when that Diet refused to reform these abuses and corruptions—and, historically speaking—the day for this protest is not yet over. Otherwise there is no reason against reunion with Rome. Certainly a reunited Christendom is the ideal Church of the future. But until Rome heeds the protest, it is difficult to hear with patience the voices of those in the Protestant Episcopal Church, who decry “the mistake of the Reformation” and “the failure of Protestantism,” and labor for the expurgation of the word “Protestant” from the title of their Church<sup>1</sup>.

It were vain to use words to tell of the ethical might of Protestantism. I only ask that its principles be not confused with the subjective, negative ones of “the Age of Reason.” There no authoritative institutions were recognized. Hence they could and should be dissolved at the private conviction of any member of them. Dissent became the rule, conformity the exception.

Before the bar of the abstract reason of the individual—a sum total of clear and fixed notions, unenlightened by traditional and current codes and customs, all institutions of humanity were summoned for trial, and all the holy and tender web of human affections and will were ignored. The growth of ideas, ideals and institutions was not recognized as the slow work of concrete reason in the race and, through this, in the individuals supposed to be private.

To-day organisms, creeds and concepts are regarded as evolutions of corporate humanity. The mental and moral concepts are looked upon as developments of the impulse towards rationality, done into men through history. That age and its abstract conception of reason is now the common object of criticism by men of science, art and literature as well as by moralists and ecclesiasts. Its philosophical quietus was given nearly at

<sup>1</sup> Appendix, note 1.

the time of its origin in the utter intellectual scepticism of Hume. Its practical issue came in the "reign of terror" in the French Revolution.

Within the limits of all the different schools of the enlightenment—the prosy scholastic English Deism, the fiery, vindictive spirit and materialistic tone of the French *Eclaircissement*, and the idealistic form of the German *Aufklärung*, there is found the same fundamental view of supremacy of the individual. The Common Creed was: I believe that I as an individual am the sole judge of what is good and true. I believe that "man (the individual) is born free, and everywhere he is in chains."<sup>1</sup> I believe that the individual should resume his natural independence—that all men are, by nature, free and equal. Priest-craft has forged the chains of an enslaving Church, state-craft those of governments, custom those of the family, and systems of thought those of theology and philosophy. I must assert my independence of all the vested rights of these tyrannies. Recognizing no organic connection of the individual with the past life of his people; denying the historic conditions which had shaped his own opinions; lacking wholly the historical spirit and method, he continually asserted—I believe that the individual should be raised out of all these tyrannies into a position of supremacy over everything. Hitherto man has been in his nonage. O blessed time that was born for the individual to resume his natural freedom and rightful supremacy—*Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri*.

It is needless to trace the wide divergence in the thought and practice within this sophistic and nominalistic phase of thought. Any history of philosophy will give the details—Erdmann's probably the best. So too any history of the political, literary, social and ethical movements of that period in the different countries where it prevailed, will fill out this barest of outlines, and show the historic worth and the practical and intellectual limitations and the final negativity of the whole movement.

<sup>1</sup> Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Bk. I, ch. I, p. I.

The function and worth of this movement should, of course, not be treated in a merely negative way. Both the historical and philosophical methods demand recognition of the function of non-conformity in all its forms. To put it in a phrase, it is the function of the *negative* in the pulse beat of life and thought—in the process of man's progress into rational freedom. It is a phase of reason both practical and speculative. Both are activities, always on the move; always changing and transforming themselves; always differentiating attained results and then going on to organize their differentiations into unity with the old—a perpetual play of identity and difference into a higher unity. Life is, to modify Spencer's formula, a continuous, though often apparently *per saltum* change from definite homogeneity, through heterogeneity and differentiations, to more complex forms of homogeneity. Each age makes institutions, as embodying its practical reason. It does its creed into life, before it formulates it into thought. But nothing finite is perfect. That is a platitude. But it is at the bottom of all criticism and of all progress. Each institution takes itself seriously as final. The world spirit denies this. It finds imperfection of function as new environment occurs. It becomes iconoclastic. But back of all forms of the negative, the impulse to rationality throbbing through humanity is only saying:

"Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,  
As the swift seasons roll!  
Leave thy low-vaulted past!  
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,  
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,  
Till thou at length art free,  
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea."

But no age does the work it thinks it is doing. Later times evaluate all differently. "After us the deluge" in a different sense than that meant in this proverb of self-conceit. It is the deluge of fertilizing rains and ploughings and harrowings and reaping of winnowed grain, sometimes tenfold and more. His-

tory no longer recites merely the mistakes of men and institutions, but reads the phase of reason at work in them. It looks at them as expressions of the life of the times, rooted in previous conditions and preparing the way for new ones. In other words, it looks at the rationality of history, under the conception of an immanent impulse to rationality in humanity—a struggle towards concrete freedom. Chance and petty Providence, and decadence, and straightforward progress, and cycles are no longer the categories used to understand history. The conception of development is the regnant conception. And development contains the negative, as the dynamic element of the process. In this progress of man into concrete freedom, every step forward is like walking—throwing one's self off of one's balance, or static condition, to catch the static form further along. The new good is ever coming by the negation of a past good, when that becomes good for but little. And yet the new is rooted in, and has its bond of continuity with, the old.

"The history of the world is the judgment of the world"—not the condemnation of any period or institution, but the valuation of them all as phases of rationality. "The history of the world, with all the changing scenes its annals present, is this process of the development and realization of spirit—this is the true Theodicy—the justification of God in history."<sup>1</sup>

The function of non-conformity in thought is also the function of the negative—not that of the absolutely negative, but that of the fulfilling negative—itself being a phase of reason. It is thought's own self-imposed negative, a self-sacrifice as a stage towards fuller self-realization. It is the mediating element—the bridge that leads from a lower to a higher stage of thought. It is thought's own recognition of the inherent antinomy involved in every finite statement, before it sees the higher point of view at which the antinomy is resolved. It is thought's own criticism of its uncriticised dogmas. And an uncriticised

<sup>1</sup> Hegel's *Philosophy of History*, p. 477

dogma soon loses its worth. It must criticise itself into œcumenicity as the various ante-Nicene doctrines as to the person of Christ criticised themselves into the œcumenical dogma of the Divinity of Christ. So with the categories of thought. Each lower category *is*, and anon it *is not*, till it is seen fulfilled in a higher one. "On stepping stones of its dead self" it rises to higher thoughts. This immanent criticism of the various categories of thought up from that of mere *empty* being—as good as nothing—through those of quantity, substance, cause and effect to reciprocity and thence through mechanism, teleology, this criticism impels thought onward till that of absolute *Self*-consciousness is reached, wherein all dialectic of the negative ceases. This is the work done by Hegel in his *Logic*. The negative is thus seen to be, not an alien force, but an immanent movement of life in each category. Finally it is seen to be the child of love—the condescension of the infinite to show the inadequacy of the finite it had made, as a stage of truth. The key-word which Hegel uses to express this function of the negative and its result, is *Aufheben*. This he tells us<sup>1</sup> has the double signification of (1) to destroy or annul; (2) to preserve or fulfill. Thus the negative is iconoclastic and yet architectonic. Or rather concrete thought uses the negative as its organ for transforming any posited conception and at the same time elevating it. Thus the gospel *annuls* the law, the fruit the blossom, the man the child, the true the false, the infinite the finite—by *fulfilling* them.

Thus all non-conformity in creed or deed is a positive negative, or has the positive function of transforming and fulfilling outworn creed and institution. It is itself not without form, though often it hides itself under this veil.

But taken by itself at one stage—the stage of protest—ere it has yet taken up the good and true in the old—it has the form of moral and intellectual scepticism. And that was the evil

<sup>1</sup> *Logic*, § 96.



element in the *Age of Reason*. That age is now stigmatized on all hands, as "the unhistorical age." It is called "the age of abstract reason," as it ignored the concrete contents of human nature as educated through ages of social organisms. It is faulted for not seeing that what one thinks and does, depend upon his intellectual and ethical heritage and environment, through which the individual is informed, enlightened, rationalized by conformity, conscious or unconscious. Psychology, sociology, science, history, literature and politics alike scoff at its abstract conception of reason and individuality.

The reason that is now appealed to as authoritative, is not that of any and every empirical individual, except so far as he has had the corporate reason of mankind worked into him by education. To repeat Aristotle's illustration, a hand cut off from the living body is no longer a hand. So the individual apart from vital relations with the intellectual and social organisms, ceases to be an organ of reason, theoretical or practical. The conception that science, sociology and philosophy now give of the individual is that of an organic member of an organic system.

Still it is possible for the most advanced thinkers, to write and fight on the over-come standpoint of sheer individualism. Thus Professor Seth says: "Each self is a unique existence, which is perfectly *impervious*, if I may so say, to other selves—impervious in a fashion of which the impenetrability of matter is a faint analogue. The self, accordingly, resists invasion: in its character of self it refuses to admit another self within itself, and thus be made, as it were, a mere retainer of something else."<sup>1</sup> I have elsewhere<sup>2</sup> commented on this frank expression of the old conception of individualism. In the same connection he speaks of the self being "in existence or metaphysically, a principle of *isolation*."

Etymologically, it is true, an individual is an undividable

<sup>1</sup> Seth's *Hegelianism and Personality*, p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> *Studies in Hegel's Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 170-175.

atom. *Individuus* is the Latin for the *ἄτομος* of Democritus. But in neither physics or metaphysics is such a thing ever more than a convenient fiction. At most an individual is one of its *kind* or *genus*, and is real only as it includes its kind by participation. Its kind is the prior and essential condition of the reality of any of its own being. The *kind*, the *genus* is real, though not real apart from its self-differentiation into organic members, as the body is not a real living body apart from its self-specification into organic members. It is this conception of *organic membership*, of function within a system, that is now the dominant conception of the individual. This is true even in physics. There are not a lot of impervious, isolated forces; but there is a *system* of forces, as self-specifications of one force. So with human individualities. The conception of *uniqueness* as the essential character of an individual has been greatly modified. "There is none like myself" is too *ungeneric* a conception. I am one of my kind, and I am I, only so far as I open my windows and let in the universal, kindred reality. Again this universal is not an abstract, unmediated universal. It is specified in others with whom I am in essential relations physical, mental and moral. The concrete individual is a whole complex of hereditary and environing elements held together in one consciousness, which itself exists only in relation to the not self and to other selves. He is unique only as a member of an organism through which the pulse beat of the kind throbs. Hand, nor head, nor heart can do their work unless they are organic members of a higher organic unity.

Such illustrations from physical organisms must not be taken as more than feeble analogies of the moral organisms of humanity. We know how many students of anthropology and sociology press the analogy into identity, thus interpreting all forms of mental and moral organisms as physical rather than spiritual. This is too often the bad metaphysic accompanying good science. The analogy of a physical organism is reduced to

that of an automatic mechanism and then used to interpret all personal and sociological forms.

But, as a living man cannot even as a physical organism be explained by all that is necessary to explain a corpse, so an ethical organism cannot be explained as a physical one can be. Thus far we have an analogy for ethical organisms. Here the analogy ends. For in a physical organism we do not have members that are self-conscious and capable of determining themselves as functions of the whole—of realizing themselves by realizing the *kind* of the whole. Here means and end become more vitally reciprocal. The organs are themselves organisms in a sense that a hand is not. So means and end cease to be relatively external. Society is not an external means for the welfare of the individual as Spencer holds, nor are individuals external means for the welfare of society, as many empirical sociologists hold. Society does not pass away when it has perfected a lot of individuals, as it would were it only an external means. So far as we can think it is as eternal as man. Nor can we think of a lot of perfected men out of a kingdom or republic.

Spencer's "man versus the state" is a man-destroying conception. Again, while moral organisms are the conditions of the moral life of individuals, its members have a personal worth of their own, as members of physical organisms do not. Apart from some such membership, they might be physical organisms—a lot of individual bodies—in that state of nature which Hobbes characterized as a *bellum omnium contra omnes*, where the life of the individuals would be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short."

Any sociology that explains individuals as mechanical parts of a quasi-physical organism—fails to recognize the place and worth of members in ethical organisms. Ethics is not physics, any more than psychology is physiology—as Hobbes and some new psychologists maintain.

It is this error of explaining the higher by the lower; of

carrying a physical explanation into non-physical realms that is to blame for our repugnance to the social view of man. And we ought to revolt from any theory that negates the comparative worth of the individual. I am a *member*, and yet *I* am I. Through me the whole kind pulsates, and yet I am I. True it is that I am not I, if I am not one of my kind, if the kindred spirit does not pulsate through me. But I am a conscious member. I can consciously conform to the life of the whole—play my part in the common life, mind my own business as a member incorporate and thus fulfill myself in fulfilling my function in the social whole.

The uniqueness of individuality is the uniqueness of function or purpose within a systematic unity, which realizes itself in and through its differentiations into members or organs. But within this higher unity—say humanity—each organ is itself a systematic unity, of self and not self and of the various “mes” within myself, to use James’ expression.

One’s own individual self is the constant identity in difference. Take such expressions as the following: “I was not myself when I did that;” “she has never been the same since her child died;” “I don’t feel a bit like myself to-day;” “he was more of himself ” or “less than himself when he did that;” “I am ashamed of *myself* for doing that;” or take the religious expressions “grant that the old Adam in this person may be so buried that the new man may be raised up in him;” “it is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me;” or take the illustration given by hypnotism and abnormal psychology as to “alternate” and “multiple personalities” in the same individual, and one may see how the static conception of individuality must be corrected.

Then too the content of the individual will be seen to be one chiefly of relations to other selves. It is true that without reflection we forget this social content of the individual. *Tarde* says: “Every social man is a veritable hypnotic. Both the hypnotic and the social man are possessed by the illusion that

their ideas, all of which have been suggested to them, are spontaneous."

Be the uniqueness of the individual what it may, it is always within, and as a member of, a larger organism. This is seen if we make an inventory of the contents of an individual of even so-called marked personality. Or any one may make this analysis of his own individuality. I, John ———, as a moral person can only define myself as an unknown  $x$ , till I see how I am defined and fulfilled by my social relations, (a) of heredity, and (b) of social environment, of family, race, school, church society, avocation and state. (a) I did not beget myself, or choose my parents, my name and the conditions of life into which I was born. I am the son of ——— who was the son of another, back to Adam, as many of the Jews now trace their pedigree. St. Matthew's Gospel begins thus: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ." St. Luke traces the genealogy of Jesus back through David, Abraham and Seth, "which was the son of Adam, which was the Son of God."<sup>1</sup>

Biographers begin with pedigrees. Their heroes are somebody primarily because they are somebody's child. Surely Marcus Aurelius was one of the strongest and noblest of moral personalities. Note how he begins those "*Thoughts*" that have been a moral tonic to all generations since he wrote. He specifies what he owed to his great-grandfather, grandfather, father and mother, before he goes on to specify what he owes to other fellowmen. "To the gods I am indebted for having good grandfathers, good parents, a good sister, good teachers, good associates, good kinsmen and friends, nearly everything good."<sup>2</sup>

Then (b) I John ———, was not, thank God, born out of but into a world of kindred fellow men; first into the warm and tender atmosphere of a home which has saturated and formed my likes and dislikes, my tastes, habits, opinions—my ineradicable prejudices. So deeply have I been dyed by my domestic

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke III. 23, 38.

<sup>2</sup> *The Thoughts of the Emperor M. Aurelius Antoninus*, Bk. I, 17.



atmosphere, that I find I cannot rub it off nor root it out. I now recognize the organic life of my family throbbing in every ethical vein of myself. First, then, I am what I am because I have been the son of somebody, an organic member of some family and some pulses of that family spirit still throb through me, making me have family peculiarities, traits, dispositions, prejudices and character, however much of a cosmopolite I have since become.

Again, I am what I am, more or less, from the place in which I was born. If so fortunate as to have a good birthplace as well as good parents, I always mention this as giving me an added worth and some presupposed excellent characteristics. How often we hear one say: "I am from Boston," "I am from Virginia, you know," insinuating that he is to be taken as possessing the marked fine traits of character that are attributed to his birthplace. When my birth-place is without repute, I feel a certain sense of humiliation in being introduced to Mr. ———, from a notable city, or town, or county. So too the disclosure the student makes in saying, "I'm from Harvard," or "I'm from Yale," are forms of self-appreciation, through places and the culture that they represent.

Again from being a son, I have become a father. A new domestic ethos permeates and enlarges me. Then I have become more of a somebody, as I have multiplied my relations to my fellow men. Every new circle that I have entered has a definite constitution and unwritten traditions, customs and *esprit de corps*. All the generic fund of human culture in these circles have been throbbing through me, as a worthy conforming member of them. I have been moralized as I have become habituated to the habits and opinions and spirit—the *prejudices* of my school, church, social set, fraternity, learned society, political party, social and patriotic organization. So, if I am to tell who I am, I must add to my pedigree all social *filiations*, that is, societies of which I am a *filius*—son. All of them have been *quasi-parental authorities*, in conscious or unconscious submis-

sion to which I have been becoming a more cultivated man. The mother-tongue of all these societies has become my language, the means of social self-expression. I know that my conversation betrays the societies to which I belong. I know that it is the warm life-blood of them that pulsates through and keeps me alive and growing. I recognize that apart from them I should be a nobody. All lay their authoritative commands upon me. These are my duties in those stations in life to which it hath pleased nature, or chance, or God to call me. They all limit my capricious subjective whims of impulse.

But in these *duties* I also recognize my *rights*, functions that belong to me as a cultivated man. In these duties I find my liberation, that is, my self-realization. I am an integer by being an integral member of these social circles. My uniqueness has been becoming more and more the uniqueness of my kinds. My integrity is conformity to their customs, laws and spirit—to the duties of each sphere. My virtues, I see, to be nearly all relative to the functions I have as an organic member of these warm, human moral organisms. I find that Schiller was right when he said: “Be a whole, or join a whole. You cannot be a whole *unless* you join a whole.” By all these I have been converted from a mere empty possibility into what I really am. These duties are objective, concrete and substantial, not begotten of my own subjective caprice. They are not, however, foreign to my real self, but kindred. These ethical organisms not only punish me for non-conformity, but I punish myself for not being a good member of them, because without the fulfilling these imposed duties I have not the rights that belong to me by nature—that is, by my second, converted, realized nature of manhood. My right to life is not merely a private right. And, as Aristotle says,<sup>1</sup> I have not the right to deal unjustly to myself—to commit suicide. That would be a crime against my family and community. Self-preservation is a duty im-

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle's *Ethics*, Bk. IV, chap. xvi.

posed on me by the community for the good of the community, and at the same time a right conferred on me as a privilege.

On the other hand, I find that I cannot sectarianize myself from these institutions without losing my rights—that apart from family I cannot be a good father or son; apart from church I cannot nourish my religious nature and so on through all the spheres in which I am a somebody.

I recognize the truth in Plato's saying "The State is man writ large." And I recognize the profound pedagogy embodied in his "Republic." Pedagogy is the art of making men ethical, and nowhere has there been such a classical scheme of ethical education as that embodied in this immortal work.

I, John ——, have therefore made it a rule to multiply my relations in order to increase myself, rather than to schismatize myself and thus minimize myself. And so I pray: From all sedition, privy conspiracy and rebellion; from all false doctrine, heresy and schism—in my relations to all these ethical organisms—"Good Lord deliver me." Divorced from them I die. "Till death us part," then, let me be a living member of these ethical circles. And then,

"Till death us join,  
O voice yet more divine."

So speaks the heart and the whole concrete ethical nature of man. What would *heaven* be without mother, wife, child, all those

"Relations dear and all the charities  
Of father, son and brother"?

So we have "common worship" and "corporate communion," as means of our corporate salvation, till we are come into the corporate Kingdom of the Church triumphant, with its various circles of corporate unions.

But this is beyond the sphere of conventional morality, and, at present, we are dealing only with this lower phase.

So we return to the question that has constantly been trying to voice itself in the midst of all this talk about organisms and

authority and conformity. Let us now utter it frankly and boldly. What place in all this is left for freedom and the rights of the individual? Has not the individual been reduced to being a mere cog in a wheel of a big machine—that turns only as it is compelled to turn—not playing its *own* part or doing its *own* duty, but being turned this way or that by the mechanical power that drives the whole?

Yet, after reflection, our quest for freedom seems very like that of Plato and his friends for Justice, *i. e.*, righteousness (*δικαιοσύνη*), after having modeled the ideal city as a large illustration of “the city within.” The model was that of a moral organism in which each member performed his own function—a civic symphony, in which each had a part to play. Having discovered wisdom and courage and temperance in this body politic, he proposes that they now hunt for the other cardinal virtue—justice. “Let us stand like a party of hunters round a cover, lest she escape us.” Soon he adds: “Surely we have been behaving very stupidly because the thing has been tumbling at our feet all the time. \* \* \* For the cardinal principle of our ideal commonwealth was that every individual in it was to have some function, be conscious of this function and then fulfil it, *i. e.*, mind his own business, or do his own duty. But is not the very essence of justice?” “Then justice,” he adds, “is not simply one among the other virtues. But rather it is that which creates and sustains the others.”<sup>1</sup> So too, he goes on to show, it is with justice in “the city within.” One is just where he has “organized himself” and “made himself completely a unity out of multiplicity,” by having each part of his nature play its own part, through the pulsing of this organic unity through them all. This is righteousness and health and freedom.<sup>2</sup>

So too freedom has been “tumbling at our feet” all through our talk about authority and conformity and moral organisms.

<sup>1</sup> Plato's *Republic*, Bk. IV, 432-433.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Bk. IV, 448.

Freedom is each one's playing his own part, doing his own duty, performing his own function in the social tissues, the moral organisms, of which he is a member—apart from which, and the realization of which, he is nothing. Authority and conformity and function are really organic elements of concrete freedom. Freedom is not only essential to morality. Freedom is morality, or rather morality is freedom.

The subjective elements of personal conviction and self-determination are certainly elements in concrete freedom. The element of *choice* means that man has power, within limits, to choose that to which he conforms. In rational freedom, it means the power to choose to conform to his typical self. This is only possible for the relatively good man—the man moralized by conformity to good customs. Milton says: "None can love freedom heartily but good men: the rest love not freedom but license." Absolute freedom, in the sense of individual license, is intolerable in any rational form of life. To choose rationally, then, one must first be good. And he becomes good by choosing that which pleases the moral societies of which he is a member; that is, by conforming to authorities, not evolved from his own inner consciousness. There is no real freedom in choosing to act like the devil. But whatever he chooses must have some determinate form of good or evil, that are relatively objective. Whence those forms? Is the moral man ever *autonomous*, as Kant held, in the sense of begetting from within these forms that make his freedom objective and concrete? Our discussion of abstract individuality shows us that he is not. The rather he is, to use the term so repugnant to Kant, *heteronomous*—finding the laws to which he conforms to be in others—the typical laws of his kind—and, ultimately, in God, the great Companion and Educator of Mankind, by means of social, moral institutions. The individual's *imperium* is always *in imperio*—in some form of the kingdom of man, which is always some form of the Kingdom of God. Thus, real freedom is just "the thing which has all the time been tumbling about our feet." In a word



we have been dealing with the genesis of the good man—with his rational self-realization or concrete freedom. Beginning with a relatively “given” element—the idiosyncrasy of the babe—we have seen how, by conforming to relative expressions of the type of manhood in the institutions into which he has been born without any choice, he comes to relatively perfect manhood, which cannot choose to do anything unmanly.

“I dare do all that may become a man:  
Who dares do more is none.”

But still comes the protest that a conformist cannot be free. Do we mean that the *good* father, son, citizen, churchman—the one who conforms himself to the ideals of these relationships, is less free than the one who does not? It is surely my duty and right to realize my *ego*, but it must be my *summus ego*. But this *summus ego* exists in no mere individual. It is generic, and I can only make it mine own by conformity to the *genus*. It will not do to take the merely subjective standpoint and say I am not free unless I can choose what I please. I must will only myself. Does that mean I must will self-will? If so, which self? Again, would that be freedom if the will which I will is not itself *self-created* instead of being “given” to every individual? Yet apart from this *given* will, man can *will* nothing, and with it he can will *nothing* unless he wills some objective content.<sup>1</sup> So even the liberty of caprice becomes a liberty of conformity.

Society always takes care of the kind of a thing which the individual chooses. I cannot do what I please, if I am to do what I should as a man. At least it depends upon what kind of a man I am. Unless I am a good mannered man, I shall find no place to do as I please, except in a desert, and there I should

<sup>1</sup> The classical characterization of both extremes has been made once for all by Erdmann in his *Psychologie*, § 160.

“The doctrine of determinism (conformity) is a will which *wills* nothing, which has not the form of will: the doctrine of indeterminism is a will which wills *nothing*, a will with no content.”

soon be pleased to return to society. "Me this unchartered freedom tires." But in society, the insane asylum, prison walls and the electric chair await me, if I do not please to do as my fellows please. It is this shallow conception of doing as one pleases in order to be free, that is the lingering heritage and heresy of the eighteenth century rationalism. It takes freedom in its etymological sense, (*liber, freon + dom*) *i. e.*, to be free *from dominion*. That is, freedom is a privative term, meaning to be free *from* everything but self, let this self be what it may—the empirical self of the stubborn child or of the bad man. Emancipation from dominion must be from the cradle to the grave—wherever there is an empirical me. I am only free when I can assert my own private, peculiar self.

I demur to the pedagogic maxim that everybody is somebody's child. That will do for children—no child is his own child. That is a silly platitude. But I am a man, and I can do as I please. I am nobody's child. Yes! But you are not your own child. At least you have been begotten of a father, and begotten into un-chosen environments. As a man, you may be self-made, and very well made at that, but you have none the less made yourself under sustaining and helpful social environment. In a desert you would have made a very different sort of a being—at best, a Mogli.

You are a man and you can do as you please. Yes, but you are a man because you have the *manners* of a man. Yes, within certain socially prescribed limits. And then even those things indifferent are made indifferent by society. It will even allow a man to play the harlequin on the stage, or to play the bear with his children. Society recognizes, as belonging to the function of every member even a *relatively* capricious sort of choice—a sphere of "things indifferent." But the freedom accorded by society is always within the limits of the human. Its object is to "turn out men."

But when we turn to mere capricious choosing, which de-

clines any of the definitely human forms, we are turning away from freedom.

"Insist upon yourself; never imitate," says Emerson. But if the self is bad or worthless, such self-insistence is suicidal and, socially, criminal.

Christianity says that such a man is a slave. Protestantism never maintained the right of the individual to choose to glorify and enjoy himself. "The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever," in all the corporate forms of life here and hereafter. Man's chief end is to be attained; his real freedom won, by his choosing to be a ministering member of God's kingdom. "God's *service* is perfect freedom." And when Protestantism comes to specify just what God's service is, it has always done full justice to the earthly institutions of the family, church, state and the various other forms of civilized life. It has never represented God's service as mere abstract spirituality. It has been the most potent factor in all forms of social righteousness, because it has insisted that God's kingdom is to have as its nursery a terrestrial kingdom.

But, it is objected again, that all men are *by nature* free and equal. This is only true when *nature* is used in Aristotle's sense of the fully realized man. Taking it in the empirical sense, it is patent that men are by nature unequal. It is only by means of a common equal education, intellectual and moral, that men become equal in a community. That is the ideal of modern politics, but not the empirical reality that faces us. A law is a liberty because it enounces a principle, conformity to which helps realize man's common, equal nature. If all men should at all times conform to all the intellectual moral, social and political laws of their community, there would be more truth in the saying that "all men are by nature free and equal." And in such conditions of objective liberty there would be more room for the free play of educated individuality. Authorities are objective reason—empirically the reason of the community, grounded in and grades of the Reason of the Universe. What

folly then—a folly nowhere tolerated—that any and every man should have the right to choose as he pleases in every sphere of thought and action. The narrow minded, the ignorant, the vicious—all these are our fellow men. Must each one of them say with the sophists of old, I am the measure of all things? My pint cup measure is as true as the measures given by any standardizing Bureau of Weights and Measures. Brother Jasper's measure gives us the sun moving around the earth. Sister Smith prescribes for the diphtheria what cured her of a colic. And so, through all the orthodox forms of logic, science and morals, each man is to be his own judge of what is good and true. Plato, in criticising the sophists, playfully suggests that this emancipation be extended to the baboon.<sup>1</sup> Let the ape have his right of private judgment. Let emancipation from common laws be universal. Let every man of any community be permitted to violate every good form, in logic, language, morals, manners, religion; let every one think and do as he pleases and then—how soon the community would cease to be. Communal laws, authorities, dispositions, however, have always protested against such protesting non-conformity. Authority has always stood for objective reason, in conforming to which individuals become more and more free and equal. Authority is always a form of objective reason, and freedom is always formed will, will habituated to good manners.

Nor, again, will it do to define freedom as the power to choose between indifferent or opposite things—the *libertas arbitrii* or the *libertas indifferentiae*. Any psychological analysis will show the impossibility of this. Motiveless choice is motionlessness of will. Buridan's ass, starving to death between two equal and equally distant bunches of hay, because he lacked this liberty of indifference, is an ass that never existed. If I could choose without motives, then I could never say to my friend, you can depend upon my doing this rather than that. The rather, I would have to say to him, there's no accounting

<sup>1</sup> Theætetus, 161.

for what I may do at any time. Nor could we ever predict what our friend might do. There would be no depending upon anybody's course of action, because of this liberty of caprice. Is not our character, our conformed "*formed will*," that which gives our friend ground to depend upon us? The more thoroughly formed our will is, the more accurately he can predict just what we shall do in certain circumstances. He knows that we have not liberty of caprice in virtue of which we can choose to do either the right or wrong thing at any time.

The truth is that *as I am* so I will choose. I choose what is congruous with my formed self at the moment of choosing. The man is the will. So it makes much difference what sort of man it is that chooses. I may act like an angel or like an ass, like Philip drunk or Philip sober, if I let the empirical *ego* of the moment be the man. And this I must do, if I do not have character—a formed state of the will. It is only so far as our will is not thoroughly habituated or conformed to good forms that we can say with Ovid, *Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*; or with St. Paul, "the good that I would do I do not, but the evil that I would not that I do." (Romans vii, 19.) Nor can I ascribe it to myself if I follow the *meliora* and to the devil if I follow the *deteriora*. As Aristotle taught, a man is equally responsible for both kinds of action—even where he has so characterized himself in evil ways as to be incapable of good action.<sup>1</sup> The only way to real freedom is conformity of the empirical selves in me to an ideal self, which, we have seen, is a social self. It is in this sense that St. Paul, when he felt that he was conformed to Christ, could say, "It is no longer I"—the empty or bad empirical self—"but Christ that liveth in me." The true self is always an *alter ego*—the social self. And true freedom is the conduct congruous with this other self. I have freedom *in* bonds, not freedom *from* bonds. Thus I am only free when I am *not* free *from* social functions,, from functioning as a good parent or child, citizen or churchman.

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle's *Ethics*, Bk. III, chap. vii.



But I may have so conformed to the manners of thieves, that I cannot conform to the manners of honest gentry. This is St. Augustine's doctrine, as well as that of Aristotle and St. Paul. He describes the state of the *non posse non peccare* as well as the *beata necessitas non posse peccare*. As I am so I act. My conduct is determined by my character.

But as I act, I become. That is, character is rarely more than relatively characterized. I am *becoming* free is the most we can say. I am "organizing myself" as a good member of society by my more or less conscious conformity to constituted social authorities. I like or dislike this or that as my taste has been cultivated towards objective standards. The whole of my self-culture has been in the medium of social culture. My conscience—using this complex of judgment, and emotion in the popular sense—rests upon a basis of social authority. As Green says: "No individual can make a conscience for himself. He always needs a society to make it for him. A conscientious heresy, religious or political, always represents some gradually maturing social conviction as to the social good, already implicitly involved in the ideas on which the accepted rules of conduct rest."<sup>1</sup>

The conscience of the good man has a history. It is an educated conscience. It becomes relatively inerrant as it becomes less private and more socialized. Its autonomy rests upon heteronomy, as this last ultimately rests upon and is derived from a theonomy. The voice of conscience is the voice of God, as mediated by all his human means of revelation. There is no absolute autonomous or self-lawgiving man, except in the sense of imposing upon himself laws which are *not* of his own making, though seen to be laws in conformity with which alone he can realize his essential nature. It is *my* conscience because it is the internalization in my consciousness of concrete, objective moral laws, imbedded in personal feelings. It is the public conscience, in so far as that is the work of the immanent

<sup>1</sup> *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 351.

law-giver, operative in the processes of human history, giving men ideals of a common good, and progressively expanding and elevating their ideals of this common good.

The whole is a process of self-realization, or a progress into freedom. In this process there is always authority and always conformity. Compulsory morality is *not* as good as none. For there is no morality without the element of compulsion. In its lowest external form it is at least educative to a higher self-compelled morality. And in the morality of the best of men it takes the more spiritual form of the *Divine* compulsion.

In all its forms it must be strictly distinguished from physical, mechanical compulsion. It is in a realm where the categories of physics have no subject matter and where teleology supplants mechanism. It is the immanent end in the race and in its members expressing itself in good forms. Even the lowest form and certainly the highest form of compulsion in morality, is rather that of *persuasion*. We persuade or dissuade our children as to certain courses of conduct by personal influence and example; by line upon line and precept upon precept. All forms of our social relations persuade or dissuade as to certain forms of conduct. We are thus educated into conviction as to right ways of action. So God compels—persuades mankind into better and better forms of living. This persuasive form of the Divine grace is mediated to individuals through social institutions. This central principle of persuasive authority is that of the Christian doctrine of Divine Grace, so that ultimately man is finding that conformity to God's authority,—that is, "God's service" is "perfect freedom."

But here we have again transcended (*a*) the standpoint of conventional morality and the utter conformity of the individual to the prescriptions of his sets. In fact we have also transcended, (*b*) the standpoint of morality altogether—even the subjective standpoint of the *good will*, or duty for duty's sake.

We have reached the standpoint that everybody is always *God's* child. Even though he be a prodigal son, the dialectic of

both thought and life is a compulsory or persuasive power to take him back to the Father. This is the theological doctrine of Divine Grace, so emphasized by St. Paul, St. Augustine and John Calvin. It is the central principle of theology, the soul of mysticism and the heart of religion. When freed from its accidental limitations, even its negative form of Divine wrath as a consuming fire, is seen to be a phase of Divine Grace, as it sweeps onward to convert even the devil himself and to drown out the inextinguishable fires of an everlasting hell, leaving at most the refining and transforming experience of a purgatory. The future *Divine Comedy*, when a new Dante is born to write it, will drop the *Inferno* or at least its everlasting character, making it the lowest circle of God's educational school of a *Purgatorio*.

(a) We have transcended the standpoint of merely *conventional morality*, though we have maintained that it is educative of the form of conscience, so that private judgment becomes the judgment of a man, not that of an ass or a criminal.

We have throughout used the term Reason in its most concrete sense, as including and fulfilling both abstractions of intellectualism and pragmatism. And we have impliedly worked with the presupposition that this concrete reason in mankind, is the progressive utterance of the universal concrete Reason in the dialects of various peoples and ages. Thus we have implicitly acknowledged the imperfection of the finite, whose only glory is that of being a stage through which the glory of the infinite pulses and shines.

What need for us, therefore, to retrace our pages and specify the limitations of *conventional morality*? Yet a brief sketch of this process of transcendence may be in place.

*First*, any *status quo* of any ethical organism may be one of corruption and decadence. There are rotten stages of all forms of ethical organizations. There are times when men are not better but worse than their creeds. The fundamental principles, the traditions and customs of a virile, pristine organism may

all be violated secretly or openly. These are the times for *reformers* to arise. But reformers never use their own private judgment. It is in the name of the letter and spirit of the acknowledged authorities that they protest. They are individuals who have been thoroughly imbued with the principles of their organization, whose characters have been formed into full conformity with its letter and spirit. They cannot smother their social conscience or gloss departure in others from its dictates. They seek, primarily, only to have men conform to the professed conventional morality. Be true to the ideals of thy set; return to the "good old times." The Reformer's first cry is, be loyal—a cry of conservatism. His spirit is filial—that of the Fifth Commandment towards his society. He criticises current corruptions by the institution itself.

But, *secondly*, the reformer is always *more* than a mere conservative of the past of his institution. Every *restoration* turns out to be a *revolution*. And this is because of the inherent dialectic of every finite form. Be the conformity absolutely perfect, the form itself is imperfect. The *status quo* is never the *status finalis*. Old forms are not only slighted and become corrupt, but they become *old*. Civilizations rise, ripen and rot. Yet ever, phoenix like, they rise again out of their ashes, but rise transformed. Finality of any *status quo* means lack of virility and final sterility. The morality of the Chinese has been stigmatized as this dead sort of life in death. Surely we must recognize the limitations of the Chinese phase of culture. But surely, too, we should recognize that it has, at least, given them the blessing annexed to the Fifth Commandment—"that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." The Chinese surely have this blessing because they are at the opposite pole of practice from that too regnant in our own country that makes the Fifth Commandment to read, "Parents, obey your children." With what delightful humour Plato plays with this conception of the younger teaching their elders—especially in his character of *Polus* in *The Gorgias*.

The Chinese have a very perfect form of education for producing this conservative spirit—that of the memorization of their classics. Too much memorizing means too little reflection. Besides, that which is memorized by the Chinese, is the wisdom of the past. They aim at, and attain, reverence for the past. Let the present be like the past, is their ideal. It conserves the paternal, or the great-grandfather form of the civilization. They seem to be impervious to the restless dialectic of the on-forcing negative. They have not learned the comparative degree of the good, or they have confounded the positive degree with the superlative. The good of the past is the best for the present. There is no better.

But the immanent dialectic in all forms, is that the good implies a better, and that, a best. No good *status quo* is as good as the best. The best criticises the good into the better, out of the old into the new. A break with the past and the present—though never absolute—is the law of all life. It is the diversity asserting itself in the identity, though continuity be preserved. The “*is*” is always running into “the is to be.” The new is always taking the place of the old, but only as it grows out of the old, and fulfills it—fills it so full that “the new wine bursts the old bottles.” It is a movement from within that is essentially one of self-development. It is a practical recognition, in a word, of the finiteness of the finite and of its immanence in the infinite. It is the gradual conformation of everything to its type or kind. It is never a mechanical development, of which the lower is the cause. The rather, too, it is a *pull* rather than a push that effects the elevation. The cause is teleological. It is the end, the good sought by the lower, that draws. And this, traced to the end of the dialectic, is the old doctrine of Philosophy—Plato’s Good, and, more concretely, the Christian doctrine of Divine grace. Man can no more

“Erect himself above himself”

than Münchhausen could pull himself out of the mire by his own cue. The evolution of man is not a mere unfolding of



what was really in the lower form, out of which he has been developed.

“A *spark* disturbs *our clod*.”

In man there is a greater than man, that urges upward. It is this immanent impulse to rationality in life and thought that is the ultimate cause of any change being a progress instead a retrogression. Progress can only mean movement towards an end. The good moves us by ideals that are better and better, nearer approximations to *The Best*—the Absolute Good—God.

But such impulse to progress in morality means the *relativity* of *conventional morals*! Yes. “New occasions teach new duties. Time makes ancient good uncouth.” Yes, and the perfect and full form has never yet been realized on earth except in the God-man, Christ Jesus. It is this imperfection of any existing *status quo* in society, the state and the church, that is the dialectic to higher forms. Yes, we have transcended the standpoint of absolute conformity to conventional morality. But we have also

(b) Transcended the standpoint of morality itself. That standpoint is the interaction of the good will and good forms for the good will. Authorities are the objective forms of the good, which the good will must will to be good. Service is a right as well as a duty. Service is freedom. *Ich diene dasz Ich bin*.

And yet the same dialectic of non-conformity that drives or lures us from one form of any moral organism to a higher form, also impels us to transcend this whole sphere of the good will and of conformity to conventional morality. For, at best, it is a sphere of the imperfect. The imperfection of the finite not only attaches to any one particular form, it attaches to the form of morality itself. The will is weak. The sight is blurred. Duty for duty's sake becomes an abstraction, and the soul faints in its fruitless efforts at self-salvation. Not only is the *status quo* of any institution in an unstable equilibrium; not only is every time out of joint and every age an age of transition, in progres-

sive morality, but *morality itself* is always out of joint, and its immanent dialectic forces to religion.

First, then, we find that not only the best conventional morality implies a better, but also that even the best of morality implies a discord in man's nature—a discord between the "is" and "ought to be." There is this in the individual. Put in religious language it is the strife between the old man and the new man. In morality, it is that between the lower and the higher self, or that between the different "mes" in the individual. Then there is the discord between his social morality and the "ought to be." Conformity is never realized by the individual, and the "ought to be" is never actualized in any moral organism of which he is a member. At best, one is a fragment, and the institutions themselves are fragments of The Best. Conforming membership in a good institution is never perfect and the institution of which one is a conforming member, is itself imperfect. Moral pathology is common, then, to both members and organisms. The good will in both is also never quite good.<sup>1</sup>

Again, even if morality could heal this breach, it would not be the full realization or freedom of man. He has needs, tastes, desires, capacities beyond the sphere of morality as such. Art and religion and philosophy have a super-morality function in the fulfillment of man's capacities. Satisfaction, self-realization, full freedom then cannot be had in the sphere of mere secular morality at its best.

What solution then can there be of this perpetual discord in man's nature, of the infinite within him trying to satisfy itself with the finite? What are the historical forms of a super-moral fulfillment of man's capacities? Art, religion and philosophy are the three spheres in which the contradiction passes in music

<sup>1</sup> Kant's classical assertion, "Nothing in the world, or even outside of it, can possibly be regarded as absolutely good, but a good will," is soon followed by the acknowledgment that no instance of such a purely moral good will is to be found. Cf. *Metaphysic of Ethics*, sections I and II.

out of sight. Here we are concerned only with religion as most immediately and generally the form of the solution of the discord. We need not debate the question, as to the historical priority of morality or religion. We are concerned with the dialectical transition of unfulfilled morality into religion as the fulfillment of that yearning for *perfection* that is always an "ought to be" instead of an "is" in man's experience.

When we speak of duties towards God, we have really passed beyond the sphere of morality as such. But in the fulfillment of *these* duties towards God we have not passed beyond the sphere of self-realization or freedom. Nor, indeed, have we passed out of the sphere of morality—even of secular morality—except in a way that makes return to it with renewed power of fulfillment. Religion, like art and philosophy, offers itself as a state of consciousness where the "ought to be" *is*. It gives fruition for struggle. For the constant failure of practical life and for the transient transcendence of art, it offers conviction of assured temporary and final fulfillment. The ideal of morality is only progressively fulfilled, and the strongest human spirit faints and fails in the struggle.

The ideal of religion is *realized here and now*. The complete surrender of the will to God, or God's full grace to man, so that at-one-ment is an accomplished fact in the consciousness, is the very essence of all religions. The sense of dependence upon God becomes the sense of independence in God. It is no longer I,—the poor imperfect finite, that live, but God that liveth in me. I am emptied of self and yet fulfilled with His fullness. I am "*complete* in Him." Religion, psychologically and historically, like morality, is founded upon, and springs out of, the discord between the "ought to be" and the "is." In religious language this discord is called sinfulness, which the Westminster Catechism defines as "want of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God." Religion heals this schism between the sinner and his God. The atonement is the one word that expresses the at-one-ment between God and man

wrought in the religious consciousness, and "peace, perfect peace" is given for the "peace-less peace below" of mere morality.

For the religious man's consciousness, there is a perfectly realized form of the good. God is perfect and God is real—the *Ens realissimum*, whereas we found in morality no such form of authority—only passing shadows of fitful ideals that, alone, lead to despair. And, on the other hand, the good-will is good, through God's grace. Such is the ideal of religion. It transcends and fulfills morality. This is done absolutely for the religious man in the atonement wrought by Christ, and in the Holy Communion, as the actual conscious realizing of this atonement. Moreover it is also done progressively in his secular life, with an assured conviction that the temporal progress is to have an eternal fulfillment. It is done symbolically and sacramentally in the Eucharist. Religion offers a *present* beatitude and the assurance of a final beatitude. Between these two beatitudes lies the realm of man in the secular—the practical task morality. But even this is transformed into religious morality. Progress becomes progress *within* the perfect. Our life is hid with Christ in God, and our faith counted to us for righteousness. *We are complete in Him.* Our life on earth goes on in the ways of morality, but with the assurance of final victory—of complete practical fulfillment—perfect freedom.

We may have mere morality, and very high and noble forms of it, for a while, without religion, but we cannot have real religion without morality. But in religion, morality is transfused and energized with the conviction that one man and God are always a majority. It is morality transformed into personal relationship with the Divine, in all the mediatorial functions of the moral organisms of which we are members here on earth. Morality becomes the doing of God's will on earth, as that will is expressed in all the moral institutions of mankind. The expulsive power of a new affection, helps in the conflict against non-conformity. It is the eternal corporate life in the souls of

believers that is at work, conforming them to the type to which they have been "*predestinated* to be conformed."

Thus real religion transforms and fulfills morality. The dialectic of morality impels us to religion—to the standpoint of conformity to God's will, in whatever way manifested, so that "God's service is perfect freedom.

But religion in the heart of man, is in the heart of a man in time and space relations—of man on earth. Hence this felt oneness with God comes through earthly mediations. It is by means of this, that and the other mediation that God's grace works the atonement—the sense of the discord and schism healed. God was and is in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. The sensuous Christ is no more on earth. Yet Christians believe in the *real presence*. The sensuous mediation for this real presence of Christ in the heart of the believer is that of worship, or to use the technical term, *Cult*. It is that which *cultivates*, nourishes, renews and strengthens the sense of at-one-ment with God. Worship is a giving and a receiving, a giving up of the imperfect, sinful self, and a receiving of God. It is "God and the soul and the soul and God at one." Self-surrender and divine grace are the elements that make worship the form of the realization of the specifically religious consciousness. Thus the *Cult* is the central fountain of the religious consciousness of perfect peace and fulfillment—the Sabbath of the Spirit that is to abide through the week days; the "vision splendid" by which the religious man "is on his way attended."

It is indeed absolutely essential that in some way the *perpetual presence* of the empirically absent Perfect be mediated to those who are to be reconciled and filled with all the fullness of God. Hence, for Christians, the Holy Communion has been the central and chief act of worship—the chief means for realizing the real presence of a bodily absent Lord. The Church which does not make much of worship, does not make men very religious. It does not realize the *religious* ideal. It may run off into the in-



tellectualism of orthodoxy or of heterodoxy. It may emphasize the practical side—drift into a species of theological pragmatism, or flourish for awhile as an “institutional Church.” It may flourish for a time, living a galvanized life, on the decaying forces of a previous religious life. It may “go about doing good” in a purely humanitarian way, but, without the constant nourishing and cherishing of the *specifically religious* consciousness; without making worship its central function and the central act of worship the central function, it will drift into the realm of mere ethics or run off into some species of ecclesiastical quackery.

If religion is to transcend and fulfill morality, then let us have religion. Let us have the specific religious consciousness, and let us use the specific means thereto. Reflection and experience force us out of the morality of “the good will,” or duty for duty’s sake, and out of that of mere conventional morality. We can only, with a good will, be conformed to the perfect. And we can be conformed to the perfect, only as we let the perfect have its transforming work in us. In the *bona fide* religious experience this transformation is wrought in our consciousness. It is thus only in the *religious* experience of man that conformity to type means real freedom, and that authority and freedom cease to be an antinomy. At-one-with God, His service becomes man’s perfect freedom.

**O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom; defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> This is the collect that Bossuet declared to be the most complete statement of human experience to be found.

## CHAPTER II

### SABATIER, HARNACK, AND LOISY

"God's service is perfect freedom." Yes! But what is His service? What are the forms, intellectual, ethical and religious in which His will is definitely stated? If I am only free when I am fulfilling my function as a member of His kingdom, then what is His kingdom, and what is man's specific function as a member of that kingdom? Concrete freedom is the highest and fullest possible exercise of all man's faculties. God's kingdom on earth must be comprehensive enough to offer right ways of thinking and right ways of doing, as well as right ways of worshipping. It must be the sphere for the cultivation of the whole man—the development of all his faculties. If the use of all his faculties is the service of freedom then the old saying of the monks is true—*laborare est orare*—to work is to worship—to work with brain or brawn is a form of self-realization. Then too Hegel's saying is true: *Das Denken ist auch wahrer Gottesdienst*—thinking is also genuine worship. Thus all normal laws of conduct and of thought are laws of God for man's development. The syllogism first formulated by Aristotle, as well as the Decalogue formulated by Moses, is a form of the Divine Logic. Then too the laws of good living as discovered by modern science are God's laws. In a word, whenever human science discovers laws and principles man is reading God's thoughts after Him—His kingdom is over all. His good-will towards man is manifested in the principles of every sphere of man's activity. These principles are everywhere the forms of divine service and of man's freedom. The revelation of these principles—man's discovery of them, is progressive, and man's

progress into freedom is in his loyalty to the fullest and highest revelation of them. He is intellectually free when he thinks according to the laws of thought in the highest form—when his science is scientific and his theology is philosophical. He is morally free when his conduct conforms to the highest conceptions of the principles that make for the well-being of mankind. He is religiously free when worshiping God according to the dictates of the highest form of religion. Whoso would be a man must be a conformist, not to the dictates of his own private, peculiar way of thinking and acting and worshiping, but to relatively normal and catholic dictates of the wisest and best. Who does otherwise sins against his own real freedom, even though following the dictates of his own conscience and mind and heart. There are always relatively orthodox and catholic forms of thought and conduct as well as of worship, conformity to which is educative of the fullest activity and self-realization of all of man's functions. Non-conformity dwarfs his development besides landing him, oftentimes, in the insane asylum and prison. The whole educational function of the state has, as its object, the training of its citizens in *common* forms of thought, knowledge and conduct. The whole educational side of science seeks to lead all men to have a common knowledge of its principles, and results to the end that they may apply them in the useful arts. The whole trend of the intellectual and ethical spheres is away from private, peculiar, subjective, capricious forms. It is seen that what is wanted for the well-being of the nation is not a lot of intellectual and moral cranks or abnormalities, but a band of citizens with a common language and science and with good manners or morals. Common principles and laws are fundamental, and conformity to them makes the free citizens of a good kingdom or republic.

"The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath." Every law is primarily made for the well being of man. It is man's right as well as his duty to conform to the laws and principles, so far as discovered, of every sphere of his activity.

It is a service that frees, because it develops him. It is a form of that service which is perfect freedom, so far as the intellectual and moral spheres are not outside of God's kingdom—an atheistic conceit harbored by few.

The welfare of the state depends upon this *common* culture of its citizens. May we not go farther and say that the welfare of the state also depends upon the religion of its people? Surely history teaches this lesson. Psychologically man is by nature a religious being—incurably so. Historically this is true, and moreover it is true that the disposition or spirit of a people has always been largely formed by its religion. And the disposition of a people begets that loyalty which is the stanchest support of the state and its civilizing institutions. And yet to-day, we find that it is chiefly in the religious sphere that authority and conformity are supposed to be inconsistent with freedom. It may be well for the state to guarantee religious liberty, but this only means that it prescribes no form of religion for its citizens. It does not mean that they can be good citizens without conformity to some form of religion. The state guarantees its citizens the right to choose their own form of worshipping God. But no state can safely guarantee all its citizens the right to be irreligious. And no historical form of religion ever did or ever can guarantee its members individual license of non-conformity at pleasure. And yet we find both friends and enemies of religion crying out to-day against all authority in religion as inconsistent with spiritual religion. Let us then carry this question of authority and conformity and freedom into the religious realm.

We may do this by a reference to the two most notable volumes on religion that have very recently been published in France. The first one is that of Auguste Sabatier<sup>1</sup> which has been translated into English under the title of *Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit*.

The second<sup>2</sup> is that of Alfred Loisy, *L'Évangile et L'Église*.

<sup>1</sup> *Les Religions d'autorité et la Religion de l'esprit*.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Évangile et L'Église*, Deuxième édition, 1903.

Of this there has not been a translation made though doubtless the mere fact of its having been placed upon the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* will guarantee a speedy rendering of it into English<sup>1</sup>. Apart from this fact it certainly deserves to be translated for its own merits.

Both of these volumes are written in defense of Christianity: Sabatier's for a minimized form of subjective religion in the soul of the individual, and Loisy's for a maximized form of objective, institutional or ecclesiastical religion. Both are conscious of the struggle of Christianity with the new learning. Both of them are fully abreast with modern culture—children of the twentieth century—accepting even more than the assured results of modern science, and of Biblical and historical criticism. Both of them find it to be “a psychological necessity for each believer to bring his inner religious consciousness into harmony with his general culture”—the religious consciousness of the one being that of a Unitarian and the other that of a Roman Catholic. Both are alike in using the historical method in their study of the origins and transformations of Christianity. Finally both are Kantian agnostics, denying the possibility of *knowledge* in the realm of religion. Sabatier says: “Scientific certitude has as its basis intellectual evidence. Religious certitude has for its foundation the feeling of subjective life or moral evidence.”<sup>2</sup>

Loisy's foundation is also of *faith* and not of *knowledge*. But with him it is not the faith in the heart of the individual, but the social, corporate faith of the religious community, which is authoritative for the individual's belief. But both alike disclaim any human capacity for intellectual knowledge of religious beliefs. Both too are alike in finding a very exiguous remnant of historical data in the New Testament. Here all likeness

<sup>1</sup> Since writing this chapter there has been a translation of the work published by Charles Scribner's Sons.

<sup>2</sup> Sabatier's *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion*, p. 312.



ceases, and we find two antipodal views of what Christianity is, that is to be defended.

Loisy defends what Sabatier rejects. The title of Sabatier's volume is a dogmatic denial of spirituality to any religion of authority. He claims that authority poisons religion, while Loisy holds that authority promotes it. Sabatier stands for subjective individualism in religion; Loisy for the social form of religion as educative of the individual. It is any authority no religion *versus* no authority no religion. Loisy defends the historical Christianity of the Church of Rome, Sabatier defends the religion that never had, and never can take, authoritative institutional form.

Both trace in identical terms the historical transformations of Christianity, but give most diverse interpretations of these changes. Sabatier interprets them as lapses from Christianity, Loisy as developments of it. Sabatier faults the Christianity of all the churches, Loisy defends ecclesiastical Christianity in its most pronounced form. Sabatier denies that Christianity is what it has become, Loisy identifies it with what it has become in the Roman form. The one seeks the kernel without the husk, the soul without the body, the essence without its form; the other comes perilously near identifying the kernel with the husk, the spirit with the letter. The one stands for non-conformity, the other for conformity in religion. The one stands for freedom from authority, the other for authority with scant measure of real freedom. Neither of them appreciates the concrete freedom of authority.

In 1897 Professor Sabatier, then Dean of the Faculty of Protestant Theology in the University of Paris, published a volume on *The Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion*, which was hailed as an epoch-making book. In fact, it covers nearly the same ground and exhibits the same principles as his last volume—though in the latter his total break with any form of historical Christianity is more pronounced. He gives up wholly the evangelical form of Christianity of which he was formerly

a strenuous defender. He gives up miracles, creeds and cult—every phase of historical Christianity that science, history and criticism object to, as belonging to the false form of authoritative religion. Still he is religious, or has “the religion of the spirit.” The volume is entitled “*Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion, based on Psychology and History.*” We find that he bases it only on psychology, and, in both volumes, declines to base it on history. “Why am I religious?” he asks. His answer is “because I cannot help it and, moreover, humanity is not less incurably religious than I am.” In a review of this first volume of Sabatier I said:<sup>1</sup>

“The whole volume partakes of the nature of a personal confession.” His sympathy with perplexed souls is intense. He himself has passed over the whole *via dolorosa* of honest, anxious doubters. What he has to say is not mere theory. It is spiritual experience. Hence the captivating warmth and conviction that gives tone to every page of the volume. . . . The tone of this volume of an octogenarian has all the vigor and inspiration and dauntless faith of a victorious leader in the prime of life. He sinks into devout meditation, and anon rises into the victorious acclaim of apostrophe. He has all the brilliancy and clearness of style that characterize French authors. And he has that which does not always characterize them—a warm, loving, and devout heart. He writes, confessedly, as a pectoralist. It is because of this that he fails to give us a *Philosophy* of Religion, as I shall note in speaking of the latter part of his work. For when he comes to his theory of knowledge he is confessedly a *Kantianer*—denying the possibility of knowledge in the realms of ethics and religion. The solution he gives is, as he says, a practical, and not a theoretical one, and, therefore (I should say), not a philosophical one. He says ‘Scientific certitude has as its basis *intellectual* evidence. Religious certitude has for its foundation the *feeling of sub-*

<sup>1</sup> *The Protestant Episcopal Review*, October, 1899.

*jective* life, or *moral* evidence.<sup>1</sup> He proclaims an irreducible dualism between knowledge and faith, while asserting validity of our confidence in the deliverances of them both.

It is the confession of one who is a Christian at heart—the result of his nurture and education in the Evangelical Church, though now a pagan in head. His first volume found a large sympathetic public. It warmed and quickened the religious life of many, enveloped in the pessimism coming from a belief that their modern culture doomed their religion. As I have further said “he regards religion as the psychological optimism of the soul in face of all the facts that make for pessimism.” It is a practical, not a theoretical, answer of the soul to all evils. “It is a life-impulse that rests upon feeling”—the feeling of dependence which every man experiences in respect to universal being. To be religious is to accept with humility and confidence our dependence upon universal spirit. This, of course, we recognize as Schleiermacher’s view, with more emphasis on the element of confidence. ‘Religion is a commerce—a conscious and willed relation into which the soul, in *distress*, enters with the *mysterious* power on which it *feels* that itself and its destiny depends.’ It is the prayer of the heart. ‘Prayer is religion *in act*, i. e., real religion.’ In an appendix, however, he gives a more radical source of religion than that of human *distress*. He finds in ‘his conscience the mysterious and real co-existence of God. It is this mystery out of which religion springs by an invincible necessity.’ Quoting from M. Charles Secretan, he says: ‘In me lives some one greater than me.’ In fact, it is this concept of the *divine immanence* that he uses throughout his chapters on Revelation, Miracle and Inspiration, where he makes sharp criticism of these doctrines when formulated from the view point of the divine transcendence. ‘Religion is simply the subjective revelation of God in man, and revelation is religion objective in God.’ Revelation is as universal as religion itself. No religion is ab-

<sup>1</sup> P. 312.

solutely false or devoid of revelation. Revelation is not a communication of ultimate, immutable dogmas, but a *divine inspiration*, evolving through the generations of mankind till it comes to its full fruition in the soul of Christ. The *dogmatic* notion of revelation is *pagan*. In its scholastic form, it is irreligious and anti-psychological. Psychologically, revelation *must* be *interior*, because God has no external form. It must be self-evident, self-authenticating. The only sufficient and infallible criterion of revelation is the psychological conviction of its fitness and power to enter as a permanent and constituent element into the woof of one's inner life, to enrich, enfranchise and transform it into a higher life. In the soul of Jesus comes the supreme revelation of God—the revelation of the divine Fatherhood in his own filial consciousness. This conscious, absolute relation to God is the heart of the dogma of the God-man. From his criticism of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, we discover again his lack of appreciation of the intellectual element of the Christian faith—a minimizing it to a degree that is extremely unphilosophical. There is little or nothing said of the Christian doctrine of sin and of Christ's relation to mankind as the Saviour. It is in the religious consciousness of Jesus that he finds the essence and principle of Christianity. The essential element in Christ's consciousness was the *feeling of his filial relation* to God, and God's paternal relation to himself. This *feeling*, filial in regard to God, fraternal in regard to man, is that which makes a man to be a Christian. Thus he considers Christianity not as a new doctrine, but a new positive force, springing from the new relation realized between the soul of man and his Father—God. A man is a Christian just to the degree in which he experiences the same filial piety that Jesus felt, or as he has the religious consciousness that Jesus had. There is no attempt to construct a scheme of salvation; no doctrine of *the way in which the religion of Jesus is re-enacted* in each believing disciple. At most, we are left to surmise that it is purely by **word**, influence and example.

Then follows a brilliant exposition of the three great historical forms of Christianity—the Jewish, Catholic and Protestant. Christianity exists to-day in the two forms of Romanism and Protestantism. The Christian seed is never sown in a neutral and empty soil. No soul and no social state is ever a *tabula rasa*. Hence the corruptions of the Christian principle. Coming into the culture and ideas and life of the Græco-Roman empire, it necessarily was modified—*corrupted* by its environment. The doctrine, polity and ritual of the Roman Church was as much Pagan as Christian. Romanism objectified and materialized the Christian principle into a visible institution, deifying the Church. The author shows but little appreciation of the vast and deep work done by the Roman Church in evangelizing the world. In fact, he throughout minimizes the importance of doctrine and organization—*i. e.*, of the *churchly* side of Christianity, without which, however, it is truer to hold that it would have passed, in the dark ages, as a dream in the night.

But such was not the mind of the founder of Christianity, and such has not been its historical course. The visible Church has been the extension of the incarnation in the secular life of humanity, gradually realizing the kingdom of God on earth. At the close of his criticism of Romanism he allows that there was always latent in it some of the power of the Christian principle. "Protestantism," he says, "sprang out of Catholicism because it was virtually contained in it," radical though the opposition is between the two. Protestantism brings back Christianity from the exterior to the interior. Christianity again becomes a principle of subjective inspiration. But, he says, there lurks a germ of Romanism in Protestantism. This is seen when Protestant churches set up certain confessions of faith as infallible, ultimate statements of Christianity. Protestantism is not doctrine, nor is it a *church*, nor can it be imprisoned in any definite form. It is a new assertion of the immanent divine life in the soul. The filial sense of God's immediate active presence



in the heart is the essence of Protestantism, as it was the essence of the religion of Jesus. In all this, it is but fair to say that he is presenting *his ideal* of what Protestantism *ought to be*, rather than Protestantism as it has been and *is*, historically. Most Protestants will demur to his ideal; and most Romanists have a right to object to his presenting rather the imperfections of an actually existing church than the ideal principle that is working in and through that form of Christianity.

Again, most Protestants will demur to much that he says in *Book III* on the nature and function of dogma. Of the three elements in dogma—the religious, the intellectual, and the authoritative—only the first is of continuous worth and validity. Only an infallible Church can set up immutable dogmas. Protestantism falls into a radical contradiction with its own principle when it attempts this. And yet dogma is necessary, because it is the natural expression of life. But life is ever changing, hence dogma is even mutable. It is essential to religion, but its office is pedagogic. It belongs not in the intellectual but in the practical sphere. It is the religious element in dogma that is valuable. The intellectual form is a mere symbol to awaken and nourish the divine life. It must never be taken as a statement of accurate, intellectual knowledge. For an objective knowledge of divine, spiritual facts is impossible. It is the error of orthodoxy to make *dogmas* the *essence* of Christianity. This error of orthodoxy is essentially rationalistic—a belief that we can have intellectual knowledge of spiritual realities. But our author is persistently and heartily a pectoralist rather than an intellectualist. He does not believe with Hegel that thinking is also a true religious act, nor that we can ever adequately *think* our religion, or have what is known as a Philosophy of Religion.

And this brings me to again notice briefly his really agnostic view as to knowledge. He accepts Kant's dualism between the intellectual and moral natures of man. Our faculty of cognition is limited to the sensuous world. We have no intellectual organ for knowing the metaphysical, the spiritual, the real. In-

tellectual knowledge or science is, he affirms, opposed to the dictates of the heart and conscience. It can recognize personality neither in man, nor in the principle of the universe. But heart and conscience cry out against this dictum of knowledge. The solution cannot be an intellectual one. It must be the practical one of the spirit's own assertion of the reality and worth of personality. This is made not by the intellect, but by the heart and conscience.

The sovereignty of personality—human and divine—is the answer of the *heart* given by religion—constituting religion.

The author affirms that we thus have two orders of conviction: first, the objective intellectual one of science; second, the subjective pectoral one of heart and conscience. These two are irreducible. Religion and morality are not reconciled with science, nor science with religion and morality. But as science is based on confidence of mind in itself, so religion is based on confidence of heart in itself. The legitimacy of the confidence of the one is as good as that of the other.<sup>1</sup> These two orders of conviction must never be confounded. Their results will always remain heterogeneous. Religious and moral truth are known, he says, by a subjective act of what Pascal calls the heart. The intellect can know nothing about them, any more than the heart can about the truths of science. 'Science is not more sure of its object than moral or religious faith is of its own. But it is sure in a different way. Scientific certitude has at its basis *intellectual* evidence. Religious certitude has for its foundation the *feeling* of subjective life, or moral evidence. The one satisfies the intellect, the other the soul. In religious knowledge the intellectual demonstration has no value beyond its use to nurture the soul.'<sup>2</sup> Demonstrations of the existence of the soul and God are ineffective to those who have no piety; for those who have, they are superfluous and impossible. Thus he makes a clear and frank confession of *agnosticism* in regard

<sup>1</sup> P. 300.

<sup>2</sup> P. 312.

to religion and ethics, and resolutely discards the 'philosophy of logical unity.'<sup>1</sup> This logically *salto mortale* is religiously a *salto vitale* to God. The subjective mind—the heart—affirms what the mind—the intellect—denies. It is an act of trust, not an intellectual demonstration, that asserts the sovereignty of the human spirit resting in the divine spirit. We agree with all that he says as to the peculiarly pectoral character of religion, only faulting his Kantian epistemology, which makes it impossible for the intellect to have knowledge of divine things. Man is a being who *thinks all his experience*, and perforce must think his *religious* experience. Thought *can* make the ascent to the Divine. Rational knowledge of the pectoral religious is possible and necessary. The real is the rational. Religious experience is real, and it is an imperative upon the mind to see its rationality.

In criticising the standpoint of Sabatier we may include Harnack<sup>2</sup> and the whole Ritschlian school. Harnack is perhaps the most radical of Ritschlians. It would be as presumptuous, as it would tedious, to state the various conservative views within the whole school. It would be folly not to recognize the positive results of the school in creating a revival of the religious life. But all this must be neglected and only the fundamental principles be noted. The school as a whole is devoutly religious. It represents a wholesome recall from mere intellectualism in religion to the specifically religious life. But when it proceeds to give grounds for religious certitude it opens the way for an estimation of the validity of these grounds. Like Sabatier, the whole school adopts the Kantian standpoint of intellectual agnosticism in the realm of religion. We cannot know God or the soul. We cannot know that Jesus is divine. Knowledge is out of the question and always fails when it is attempted, as the history of Christian doctrine shows. This intellectual

<sup>1</sup> P. 314.

<sup>2</sup> Harnack's *What is Christianity*, translation of his *Das Wesen des Christentums*.

nescience is supplemented by a religious *Pragmatism*.<sup>1</sup> Doctrines are true only so far as they are of worth to us. All "helping ideas" have corresponding realities. The idea of God is "a helping idea." God is real for the heart, not for the mind. That is, in religious matters they make "judgments of value" take the place of judgments of existence in the realm of knowledge and then turn round and say that judgments of worth (*Werturteile*) certify reality to us. They agree, then, with Sabatier in an appeal from intelligence to some other form of experience for certitude in religious experience. They agree, too, with him in decrying authority in doctrine and cult, and in falling back to the standpoint of *immediacy* of feeling in the soul of the individual. As Harnack says: "It is God and the soul and the soul and God that is the whole religion." They agree too with him in his cry, back from the Christianity of Creed and Church to the personal religion of Jesus of Nazareth that, by contagious sentiment, we may have the same sense of filial relation with God that he had. That alone is true religion.

Professor Harnack, doubtless, represents the most radical form of Ritschlianism—his brilliant historical scholarship leading further along the same anti-ecclesiastical line of the whole school.

His volume created the same furore in Germany that Sabatier's did in France. In fact both of them have found a large reading in England and America also. Harnack's volume lacks some of the personal interest and religious warmth of Sabatier's. But it is just as brilliant and attractive. It consists of sixteen lectures given before a large University audience in Berlin in 1899-1900. The wonderful interest excited by both these books serves to show what a large part of cultivated people are still deeply interested in religion. What is Christianity? What is the abiding essence (*Wesen*) of the Christian religion? Is it not something that may still be ours, in spite of the down-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix, note 7.

fall of church and creed and cult before the bar of modern culture? Such are the questions of Harnack as well as Sabatier.

When we think of it, it does seem like a strangely belated inquiry to ask what Christianity is, after its nineteen centuries of vigorous, world-wide existence. But it is not so strange when we remember that for these authors and for a very large portion of cultivated people, historical Christianity is an intellectually discredited religion. But as mankind is incurably religious, the leaders must either invent a new religion or reform the old one. The attempt must now be made to find an inmost abiding kernel, after all the husks of historical Christianity have been torn away. They are religious. They want to be Christians—all their religious life has been nurtured in Christianity, and they are loth to give it up. Hence their earnest endeavor to find a way of faith in the midst of their shipwreck of belief. They are Christian mystics, afflicted with all the ailments peculiar to modern culture, and yet they turn to Jesus—hero-worshippers in spite of the marring of his divinely human face by the Christian Church. They will be Christians in spite of the Church. They will form an *ecclesiola in ecclesia*, a “righteous remnant” of those who have “the religion of the spirit,” freed from the incredulous superstitions of any form of a “religion of authority.”

A brief sketch of some of the views of Sabatier’s last volume and of Professor Harnack’s lectures may well precede a criticism of their fundamental principles. We have already stated the views of Sabatier’s first volume. He devotes two-thirds of his second volume to the most drastic criticism of all forms of historical Christianity as being forms of “religions of authority,” irreconcilable with “the religion of the spirit.” We may omit his criticism of the Roman Catholic form, as it is practically identical with that of Harnack, which we shall give further on. Having torn the rags from Romanism and exhibited an unspiritual skeleton, he turns his criticism upon the authoritative forms of Protestantism. The Pope of Rome is



shorn of his illegitimate authority. And now "the paper pope of Protestants"—the Bible—must be deposed from the position of authority accredited to it by Bibliolaters. He affirms that Protestants have never been true to their principles. He defines the Reformation as a revolt from all externalism and authority in religion, based upon the inward subjective experience—the witness of the spirit, the confidence of the child in the Heavenly Father's love. The ultimate Protestant principle is that of the autonomy of the Christian conscience. But "the Catholic principle survived in the Protestant churches. Not only was the dogmatic tradition of the councils and Middle Ages maintained, but no one entertained a doubt that an infallible external authority was necessary. The attempt was made to constitute it by the dogma of the infallibility of the Scriptures and on this foundation to build up an authoritative theology."<sup>1</sup> He holds that the moment Protestants framed an authoritative theology and church, they departed from their true principle that the Bible is to be interpreted by the individual reason and conscience. But, in fact, this was the view only of the Anabaptist sects. After tracing the rise of *authority* in the Protestant churches, he compares it most unfavorably with the Catholic form of authority—both systems belonging to the same family. "The Protestants were led to establish the infallibility of Scriptures along the same path by which the Catholics established that of the Church."<sup>2</sup> "From whatever point of view we examine the two systems, the advantage is incontestably on the Catholic side."<sup>3</sup> The first rests on a political, the second on a literary fiction. "Both are the fruit of an exaggerated and misunderstood craving for authority," And authority in religion is always an impertinence. Then follows his description of the dissolution of the Protestant authority, through the progress of Biblical criticism and the historical method. "The Protestant

<sup>1</sup> P. 154

<sup>2</sup> P. 185.

<sup>3</sup> P. 186.

system of authority has broken down forever" while the Catholic system has established and completed itself by the Vatican decree—"one of the grandest political spectacles extending its rule over more than one-third of Christendom." Hence in their final struggle "there is no other choice for Protestants but either to turn back again to the Roman Catholic Church whence they once came out, or to rise joyously and vigorously from the religion of the letter to the religion of the spirit."<sup>1</sup> Both these forms of authoritative religion—the pagan and the Jewish periods of Christianity are now broken and "the truly Christian period is about to begin. The religion of the priesthood and the religion of the letter are outworn and dying before our eyes, making way for the religion of the Spirit."<sup>2</sup> It is like a captive bird that may tremble as it sees its cage falling to pieces around it. But it is now singing over the fragments, conscious of its wings, and of liberty to use them. The third part of the volume is devoted to this "new religion" of the Spirit, which he characterizes as "the religious relation realized in pure spirituality." And this is only the primitive gospel in its reality. For the gospel in its very principle implied the abrogation of religions of authority.<sup>3</sup> The heart of the gospel is the consciousness of a filial relation between child and father. To be a Christian is to live over within ourselves, the inner spiritual life of Christ—to feel the presence of a Father, and the reality of our filial relation to Him just as Christ felt this in himself. Jesus is only the soul of the race in whom this consciousness of filial relation to the Father first came to full realization. And the spirit of divine sonship, learned from Jesus, is the essence of the religion of the spirit. "Jesus liberated his disciples' consciences equally with his own." He claimed no authority over them. His authority is only that of the revelation of the Father. Jesus taught no dogmas, but a new religious sentiment was aroused

<sup>1</sup> P. 253.

<sup>2</sup> P. 281.

<sup>3</sup> P. 282.

by his life among men. "There was a contagious sentiment of an entirely new relation—a filial relation to God."

"Jesusolatry, that is, the separate worship of the man Jesus, is, so far as the Christian religion is concerned, as truly idolatry as the adoration of the virgin and the saints. It is as repugnant to Protestant piety, in its deep instinctive tendency, as to the *primitive* gospel. Jesus never claimed worship for himself."<sup>1</sup> He discusses and thus dismisses the authority of Jesus as it has been held by Catholics and Protestants alike. In fine, as he would make every religious man his own Moses, so would he make him his own Jesus. We are Christians just so far as we reproduce his personal piety in us. "But," he asks, "does not the person of Jesus occupy a central place in his gospel?" With some circumlocution he answers No! "The orthodox doctrine of the Divinity of Christ distorts the true gospel. . . . In the dogma of the Trinity there is a root of paganism."<sup>2</sup> All such doctrines are "positively outside of Christianity and outside of the gospel of salvation. Jesus never demanded such adoration from his disciples." "Jesus simply tried to modify and renew the religious consciousness of his disciples by imparting to them the purely religious and moral content of his own consciousness."<sup>3</sup> Yet on a previous page he speaks of the sense of sin and says that the simple and profound story of the prodigal son is the whole gospel. He speaks of all conceptions of the Divinity of Christ as "pagan imaginings, more worthy of worshipers on Olympus than of those on Tañor." The religion of the spirit has to guard itself against paganism (*i. e.*, sacramentalism) by *critical symbolism*, and against the Jewish error (of orthodoxy) by *fideism*. "The religion of the spirit (thus) embodies the living practical synthesis of critical symbolism and *fideism*."<sup>4</sup> We need not even accept all the personal

<sup>1</sup> P. 294.

<sup>2</sup> P. 330.

<sup>3</sup> P. 331.

<sup>4</sup> P. 339.

views of Jesus. The thing is to share his filial piety. I have referred to the warm personal enthusiasm that animates both of Sabatier's volumes, making them a sort of a confession of faith of a doubting and believing soul. His last paragraph is pathetic. Speaking of his love of philosophical reflection he says: "There is something more urgent, more necessary than to *explain* the experiences of piety, and that is to *make* them. At the close of this long effort of research and meditation, the author is not exempt from a certain lassitude of mind and heart; and he lays down the pen with the prayer of our old Corneille:"

"O God of truth, whom only I desire,  
Bind me to thee by ties as strong as sweet;  
I tire of hearing, of reading too I tire,  
But not of saying: Thee God alone I need."

The pathos is heightened by the fact that he sought relief from the lassitude by a trip to Palestine, leaving the command that his book must be published, if anything happened to him on the journey. "I have work planned out for two hundred years," he said, and yet, worn out by his labors, he soon gently breathed away his life, while praying "Our Father who art in heaven"—a Christian at heart though neither a Catholic nor a Protestant in head.

He calls his new view of Christianity, "the Religion of the spirit," *symbolo-Fidéisme*. *Fidéisme* or faith-ism is the essence of Christianity. He defines this term to mean that "Salvation is by faith, independently of belief." Symbolism designates the merely parabolical or figurate character of all dogmas.

Sabatier finds a sort of necessity for dogmas, but denies all elements of knowledge in them. Dogmas must cease to be dogmatic. They are only helpful symbols in a region where knowledge is impossible. They are at best but suggestive parables. "It would be an illusion to believe that a religious symbol represents God as He really is, and that its value depends on the exactness with which it represents Him. The true content of the symbol is entirely subjective." We cannot know

God. Jesus himself did not *know* God. He used the term Father to symbolize the feeling of his heart in relation to the Great Unknowable: *Father* is but an imaginative symbol. Dogmas are poetry, not science.

His *critical symbolism* is the intellectual form that remains after his frank acceptance of Kantian agnosticism. He denies the possibility of knowledge in the realms of ethics and religion. "*Scientific* certitude has for its basis *intellectual* evidence. Religious certitude has for its foundation the *feeling* of subjective life, or moral evidence." We cannot *know* God or spiritual experience. We can only express in symbols the feelings of our hearts. He uses Ritschl's distinction between judgments of existence and judgments of value (*Werturteile*).

Our knowledge of God is only symbolical. It is a value-judgment as to our psychological experience. All that validates the religious experience of Jesus is the response it awakens in our heart. The intellect can know nothing about this any more than the heart can about the truth of science. Here all authority beyond that of the individual's feeling is out of court. Institution and doctrine are impertinences—pagan and Jewish corruptions of the pure gospel.

The two principles at the basis of Sabatier's view are, first, his intellectual agnosticism and second, his pectoralism—*Pectus est quod Theologum facit*.

Apart from the warm, charming personal element and the brilliant, vivid and declamatory form, we have here the solution of a devoutly religious man's attempt to bring his "inner religious consciousness into harmony with his general culture," in science, history and Biblical criticism. We should note that in his first volume<sup>1</sup> he emphasizes the psychological side of religion and then uses the historical method to destroy the validity of all forms of institutional and doctrinal Christianity. Psychologically also, religion must be purely interior as God has no external form. It is the presence of God in the heart. *Quid*

<sup>1</sup> Preface, p. xv.



*interius Deo?* he asks, and quotes M. Secretan, "In me lives some one greater than me." Finally after his drastic treatment of concrete religion in institutional and dogmatic forms, we have left only this psychological feeling, the scanty residuum, which he terms "the Religion of the Spirit," the kernel without the husk. Before noticing the unhistoricity of his view of religion and criticising his standpoint, we wish to state briefly the similar standpoint and principles of the Ritschlian School. Details will be unnecessary. We can make a composite photograph of the views of Ritschl, Hermann, Kaftan, Bender, Harnack and Paulsen.

(1) The object of this school is to save religion from scepticism—to find a ground of certitude for religion, which will be independent and unassailable by all critical, scientific and philosophical theories. This certitude is an *inward feeling*, the impression which Christ makes upon the soul, that in him God is drawing nigh you. Much more stress is laid upon the personal influence of the historical Jesus by some of this school than is done by Sabatier. "We are compelled to say" (says Hermann), "that the existence of Jesus in our world is that *fact* through which God so touches us that He opens up intercourse with us." Jesus "finds us." Christianity is self-evidencing in the experience of the Christian. Emphasis is laid upon the historical Jesus, though the presence of legendary and non-historical matter in the gospels is freely admitted. Thus Harnack says there is no historical proof of the resurrection of Jesus. But allowing all legendary, mythical and unhistorical elements that criticism finds in the gospels, there is still left a historical Jesus who warms our hearts and wins our reverence and leads us to the Father. But it is the historical Jesus, not the Christ of the Church and dogma. What Jesus was before his birth, and where or what he is now, are matters beyond our experience. And Ritschlians build only on the immediate impression made on us by the historical Jesus. Practically they give us only the picture of Jesus of Nazareth, in place of an ever living and ever

present Christ. Their teaching excludes all metaphysical views as to the nature and person of Christ as formulated in Christology. Their cry is "back to Jesus." Away from the Christ of the church and the creeds, to the historical Jesus, and the positive experience which the gospel portrait makes upon the human soul. "Theology without metaphysic" is the watchword of the school. The bane of dogmatic theology has been its metaphysical interpretation of the person of Jesus. This must all be given up because,

(2) We have no organ for knowing the supra-sensuous. In philosophy they are agnostic. Intellectually they are Neo-Kantians—denying the possibility of *theoretic* knowledge of God and spiritual realities. Knowledge is confined to sensuous, time and space realities—the realm of science. It cannot deal with spiritual realities. Knowledge-judgments are out of their province in religious matters. How then can we have religious certitude, when all theoretic knowledge is denied?

(3) Here they modify Kant's Practical Reason to suit the religious rather than the moral sphere.

Judgments of value or Worth judgments (*Werturteile*) are distinguished from judgments of existence as to sensuous reality made by the faculty of knowledge. I *know* the sun to be what physics and astronomy tell me that it is. But the sun warms me. It is good to be warm. I judge the sun to be good. So critical history gives me the historical phenomenon of Jesus. But my knowledge of the historical Jesus makes such an impression upon me, meets so many of my religious needs, that he is of the greatest value to me. I make the value-judgment that Jesus is divine. All religious knowledge is of a generically different order from knowledge properly so called. It is essentially *faith* rather than knowledge. It deals not with objective or existential truth, but with experiences which have value for us as religious beings. It belongs to the theoretic faculty to tell us just what the real historical person Jesus was. Bring this real Jesus before us and we feel that he is good,

divine, just as we feel that the sun is warm and good. We do not know that, objectively, Jesus is good and divine. The qualities we attribute to him are expressions of what he is to us, just as the brightness of the sun is, to use Locke's formula, only a secondary instead of a primary or objective property of the sun.

So we believe in God as Father, not because we know Him as such, but because of a subjective, secondary quality, inherent in us, not in Him. We believe in Him because it is a "helping idea," as they term it. It is good for us to believe in God as a Father, as Jesus did, because it helps us, as it helped him, to lead a beautiful spiritual life. If we said that we knew God, science would sweep the heavens to find him and then turn to us and say, I find no heavenly Father. Thus it is not really God the Father that helps us, or Christ that saves us. The historical Jesus is dead and buried, and God the Father cannot be found. But our faith in them are "helping ideas" whereby we save our own souls. It is not a living, present Christ that works the mystic process of redemption within us. But we find that by believing and acting as if the unknowable God were a Father, as the dead Jesus did when he was alive, we are able to have a deeper and fuller religious life. We are not to accept this Fatherhood-of-God belief on the authority of Jesus. But we are to try the effect upon ourselves of believing it as he did. It is only in this sense that Jesus mediates to us this feeling of filial relation to God. It is merely a value-judgment when we affirm that the historic Jesus had the highest spiritual experience. He now lives only as a memory, and affects us only as the memory of any other departed great soul affects us. The ever-living presence of Christ in the heart, or in the Eucharist, is set aside. Jesus lived and died and was buried. That is the historic Christ for Harnack and most of the Ritschlians. Our religious experience of filial relation to the unknowable God is only awakened and nurtured by our knowledge of this person of past history. This is the only mediation allowed. So that

after all their standpoint is practically the same as Sabatier's—*i. e., immediacy, pectoralism, subjectivity.*

Another point of similarity with Sabatier is the conception the school has of the kingdom of God. Suffice it to say that this is purely a spiritual kingdom. "The kingdom of God is *within* you," is the one misinterpreted text on which they found hostility to an external kingdom, an ecclesiastical organization—a body for the continual real presence of an ever living Christ on earth. It antagonizes all political (using the term in its true sense) organization of the kingdom as it does all speculative theology. It wants the historic Jesus, without historical Christianity. Dogmatic theology and ecclesiastical organizations are, alike, pagan perversions of the pure gospel. Here again we have the subjectivism of "the kernel without the husk," the spirit without the body. Again, all the Messianic conceptions that Jesus had are merely the local coloring and temporary husk of the true religion in the heart of Jesus. He was mistaken in his Messianic ideas.

Here we may take Harnack as the most radical representative of the school. In his recent work<sup>1</sup> he repudiates Christology, with the rest of the school. But his chief *bête noire* is the Church. He practically discards historical or ecclesiastical Christianity as a perversion of the Gospel. We note in passing Harnack's reduction of Jesus to mere but lofty humanity; his discarding of the miraculous elements of the Gospel, and his frank repudiation of "Jesusolatry." The Gospel, as Jesus proclaimed it, has to do with the Father, *not with the Son.*<sup>2</sup> Jesus was the pathfinder, not the path. His Messianic assumptions were merely the accidental mistakes due to his environment. In fact we may say that on all supernaturalistic views of the Gospel he occupies the point of view of what may be termed "modern culture," and like Sabatier he tries to bring

<sup>1</sup> *The Essence of Christianity*, or as the translator calls it, *What Is Christianity?*

<sup>2</sup> P. 154

"his religious consciousness into harmony with it." Practically, he does this by throwing overboard the whole of the interpretation of Christianity as made by the Church. Thus he accepts as the "Easter faith" of eternal life, but rejects the "Easter message" that Jesus arose from the grave and appeared to His disciples. A few years ago he advised German theological students with *advanced* views to petition the government to cut out the Apostles' Creed from their required ordination vow. The essence of Christianity with him is the life of Jesus in the soul of man. Or it consists uniquely in the faith in God the Father, which Jesus has revealed. Filial confidence was the essence of the personal religion of Jesus. And identity of this sentiment in Jesus and in Christians constitutes the continuity of Christianity and the immutability of its essence.

"But the fact that the whole of Jesus' message may be reduced to these two heads—God as Father and the human soul so ennobled that it can and does unite with him—show us that the Gospel is nowise a positive religion like the rest."<sup>1</sup>

He puts all of Jesus' teaching under three heads:

"First, the Kingdom of God and its coming.

Secondly, God the Father and the infinite value of the human soul.

Thirdly, the higher righteousness and the commandment of love."<sup>2</sup>

Again. "In the combination of these ideas—God the Father, Providence, the position of men as God's children, the infinite value of the human soul—the whole Gospel is expressed."<sup>3</sup>

He explicates the Kingdom of God, entirely unhistorically, as a purely subjective, spiritual kingdom. The kingdom of God is within the heart. He maintains that Christ divorced his ethical teaching entirely from the external forms of religious

<sup>1</sup> *What Is Christianity?* p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.



worship. The *higher righteousness*—freed from alliance with the public religion, laid emphasis on the “intention” of the doer. Its root is the disposition in the heart.<sup>1</sup>

He believes only in the imitation of Christ and not in Jesus-worship. For he agrees with Sabatier that Jesus himself does not occupy a central place in the Gospel. It is God the Father that is the heart of the Gospel.

“The Gospel, as Jesus proclaimed it, has to do with the Father, not with the Son.”<sup>2</sup> He was only the first personal realization of filial relation to the Father. It was his disciples, and the Apostles, and the Fathers and Doctors of the Church who put the Person of Jesus in place of his Gospel of the Fatherhood of God.

“The sentence—‘I am the Son of God’—was not inserted in the Gospel by Jesus himself, and to put that sentence there side by side with the others, is to make an addition to the Gospel.”<sup>3</sup>

“That it is a perverse proceeding to make Christology the fundamental substance of the Gospel is shown by Christ’s teaching, which is everywhere directed to the all-important point, and summarily confronts every man directly with his God.”<sup>4</sup> “Paul became the author of the speculative idea that not only was God in Christ, but that Christ himself was possessed of a peculiar nature of a heavenly kind.”<sup>5</sup> In consonance with this, the doctrine of the atonement is explained as a later addition to the pure Gospel, made by Paul—“the most luminous personality in the history of primitive Christianity.” In fact, he gives up the whole of the Church’s teachings as to the person and work of Jesus as Son of God and Saviour—demurring to the “putting a Christological Creed in the forefront of the Gospel.” Jesus was not the eternal Son of God, but the loftiest of the sons of men.

<sup>1</sup> *What Is Christianity?* p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 198.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 199.

Hence all worship paid to Jesus is a form of idolatry. For he is still only a man—a man with lofty and inspiring views about the Unknowable as a Father. He was subject to imperfection of knowledge; biased by the Jewish Messianic conceptions and in no way infallible. How then is his religious feeling of filial relation to the Father to be certified as other than a personal idiosyncrasy of feeling—contagious indeed—but why any higher or truer than that of some other man?

“The identification of the *Logos* with Christ was the determining factor in the fusion of Greek philosophy with the Apostolic inheritance and led the more thoughtful Greeks to adopt the latter. Most of us regard this identification as inadmissible, because the way we conceive the world and ethics *does not point to the existence of any Logos* at all.”<sup>1</sup> He has previously objected to this identification of “a person who had appeared in time and space relations” with the eternal *Logos*. In fact he throughout strenuously attacks the whole of the Church’s Christology—objecting to this transcendental, cosmical and eternal form being given to any Son of Man.

The latter part of his book is given to the overthrowing of historical Christianity, by showing the historical origins of the Church’s interpretation and the extension of the gospel as a kingdom of God on earth. It is by the use of the historical method that he seeks to invalidate all the historical forms of authority in religion. We need not go into details. He covers the same ground, and in much the same way, as Sabatier and Martineau, to show that the kingdom of God is within the soul and not in any external institutional form; that historical Christianity is not true pure Christianity. All historical transformations of Christianity are perversions of, and lapses from the pure gospel. That is really his thesis. The meal, in which the leaven was placed, corrupted the leaven rather than the leaven leavening the whole lump. In this course of transformation it is only occasionally that the true Gospel shines out as in the apostolic age,

<sup>1</sup> P. 220.

especially in the universalizing of the Gospel by St. Paul ; in the evangelical side of St. Augustine, and in the inwardness and spirituality of the first phase of the reformation, especially in Luther. In the patristic age, "a blow was dealt to the direct and immediate element in religion," as Christians were brought under the authority and tutelage of the church. Growing intellectualism was beginning the mischievous work of *orthodoxy*, and the church was developing into an institution with power over the individuals. In the Greek church, the Gospel "takes the form, not of a Christian product in Greek dress, but of a Greek product in Christian dress." Here too developed the slavish obedience to tradition and here too "arose the aggressive and all-devouring orthodoxy of State and Church, or rather of the State-Church."<sup>1</sup> "But with traditionalism and intellectualism, a further element is associated, namely ritualism." Christianity relapsed into the lowest class of religions—"descended to the level where religion may be described as a cult and nothing but a cult."<sup>2</sup> "As a whole and in its structure the system of the Oriental churches is foreign to the Gospel."

The Roman Catholic Church, while far in advance of Greek Catholicism, however, only exaggerated its evil of ecclesiasticism. It "privily pushed itself into place of the Roman world-empire of which it is the actual continuation."<sup>3</sup> Finally he asks as to Roman Catholicism, "What modifications has the Gospel undergone and how much of it is left? This, however, is not a matter that needs many words—the whole outward and visible institution of a Church claiming divine dignity has no foundation whatever in the Gospel. It is a case not of distortion, but of total perversion."<sup>4</sup>

Finally, after acknowledging that "the Roman Church is the most comprehensive, the vastest, the most complicated and yet

<sup>1</sup> P. 242.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 256-261.

<sup>3</sup> P. 270.

<sup>4</sup> P. 281.

at the same time the most uniform structure, which so far as we know, history has produced," he goes on to declare that "Roman Catholicism has nothing to do with the Gospel, nay, is in fundamental contradiction with it."<sup>1</sup>

This is noteworthy as showing the lack of the historical spirit in one using the historical method. The greatest historical institution of the world is not significant of God in history.

His treatment of Protestantism is not so full or drastic as that of Sabatier. He emphasizes especially the protest of the early reformers against sacerdotalism; against all formal external authority in religion, and against all ritualism. At the same time he speaks of "the Catholicising of the Protestant Churches," adding, "I do not mean they are becoming papal: I mean that they are becoming churches of ordinance, of doctrine and ceremony."<sup>2</sup>

All this is again the "putting of religion on the Catholic plane." Protestant Christianity in making doctrine, discipline and worship of Christ to be essentials of Christianity is only another form of a religion of authority, which calls for an earnest protest of liberty of the Christian man; a return to the pure primitive Gospel; a casting away the husks of religion, and keeping only the kernel; an endeavor on the part of each individual to be a Jesus, or to have his personal feeling in his heart apart from historical, institutional Christianity; apart from all the historical forms devoted to the nurture of man's religious nature.

<sup>1</sup> P. 283.

<sup>2</sup> P. 316.

## CHAPTER II—*Continued*

Taking Sabatier and the Ritchlian Harnack as the religious representatives of modern culture, we find what an insignificant remnant of historical Christianity can be accepted. Authority and conformity are set aside as inconsistent with freedom. In the soul of each individual, the immediate relation to God is the whole soul, life, spirit and authority of religion. There is no orthodoxy, no communal authority, no authority even of a Jesus. It is only just to state that both of them were nurtured in the evangelical type of Protestantism. It is fair to suppose that, without this nurture, they would not have been so deeply religious in spirit as they show themselves to be, nor so earnest in seeking a secure place for religion in modern life.

They accept modern thought as authoritative. Christianity must be purged of any statements or belief that conflict with it. Modern thought is knowledge. And where Christianity, in its intellectual form, contradicts modern culture, it is to be given up. Only the subjective feeling or sentiment—the essential element in Christianity—is to be kept. All else is husk, superstitious idealizings of facts.

The *Zeitgeist* has so fully mastered them that they mistake the spirit of the age for the spirit of the ages. They are too ready to apply to the historical forms of Christianity the poet's lines :

“Our little systems have their day,  
They have their day and cease to be.”

But they have not profited by a study of the history of all forms of knowledge, and especially of the forms of criticism, to apply these lines to them. They are too ready to accept modern critical views as final; to accept the spirit of this age as that of “the age of of reason.” Both of them, too, being students of



history and using the historical method fail to see the perfectly unhistorical spirit they betray in their interpretation of all the forms of historical Christianity as being corruptions rather than developments.

Both also fail to see that their "essence of Christianity" and "religion of the spirit," are no more reconcilable with the metaphysics of modern science than is any form of orthodoxy. This has no more place for God the Father and the filial relation of man to Him, than it has for the husks which they have discarded. All are alike *Aberglaube*. It is simply impossible for any one who holds the rigid mechanical view of the universe, and the theory of reality that is put forth by some men of science—the bad metaphysics which really form no part of positive science—to find any place for any sort of religion.<sup>1</sup>

The enlightenment, the critical empiricism of the mere understanding always means the dry rot of all living institutions. When the "very pulses of the machine," of wife, mother, child; of literature, art and religion, are laid bare and declared to be the whole of their reality; when the nimbus of the higher humanity, the warm life-blood within and the garments of light and beauty and worth without, are criticised away we are left with a lifeless skeleton.

"The parts in his hand  
He may hold and clasp,  
But lost is the living link, alas!"

Life goes with it out of all thus criticised. Our literature ceases to be inspiring and elevating. Our art becomes mechanically and vulgarly realistic. Our religion becomes at best an arid Deism. Our sacred books—well, look at what our modern scientific criticism has made of the Bible. Granted that from their point of view the critics have done scientific work, it remains to be said that their work is abstract and imperfect as an analysis of the real concrete nature of the Bible. Looked at from their point of view alone, it ceases to be *The Bible*—the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chap. IV of this volume.

life-giving form of sacred literature. This shows, at least, the inadequacy of the scientific and critical points of view. It shows that their categories cannot measure man as a creature of a larger discourse; that to have a spirit we need the nearer, clearer, more concrete view, that art, religion and philosophy afford.

God the Father is not a verifiable entity for the monistic metaphysics of some men of science. Where Nature is all, the real reality—God—there is none.

But let us note, to what they have reduced Christianity—what enveloping husks of historical developments they have peeled off, to find the pure undeveloped form to which they still give allegiance. They give us—

- (1) A non-miraculous Christianity.
- (2) A non-Christocentric Christianity.
- (3) A non-credal Christianity.
- (4) A non-ecclesiastical Christianity.
- (5) A non-cult religion.
- (6) A non-knowable Deity.
- (7) An immediate feeling in the heart of each believer of his relation to the Unknowable God, as Father.
- (8) A dead and buried Jesus of Nazareth—a man in whose heart there was true religion and whose message is above his person.

The six negatives set aside all the historical forms in which the Church has embodied her exposition and mediations of Christianity. The two positives have always been held by every form of the Church, but not in the abstract form in which they present them. As a matter of historical fact there never has been such a form of Christianity on earth. Such a Christianity has to be evolved from the inner consciousness of the critics. The real Christianity, which it is the business of historical students to study, and of philosophers to estimate, is the factual Christianity of the Church—a Christianity of creed, cult and polity, a kingdom of God on earth—in our midst. We may

grant the relative imperfection of all these factors, and the temporary and metaphorical character of many religious conceptions. But we must distinguish between these and speculative, catholic theology. So too, as to the persistent type of polity and cult, amid all their transformations—Roman, Greek and Protestant. We must see them as organic elements in an institutional Christianity that has had a much more permanent form than any civil institution. We must see the function of all these elements in the educative work of the Church, and the ideal end towards which it has been so mightily energizing through the centuries. Philosophy is not religion, but it gives the rational interpretation of it, which neither science nor history can give. They can give the facts and the order of facts, but not the spiritual link, not the teleological logic immanent in the whole history of Christianity that makes it evident that it is a work of God.

It is to be noted that these writers give up the miraculous element in the New Testament. They practically accept the views of Strauss and Renan. Thus they answer the objection of modern thought to miracles, by agreeing with it. The miraculous birth, resurrection and glorification of Jesus form no part of the historical Jesus, or of the essence of Christianity. This, of course, is a break with the whole historical view of Christ, woven into the very fibre of the Church's interpretation. It gives us a purely human Jesus, with at best a uniquely acute sense of that filial relation to God that is possible to all men—aroused and quickened more or less by means of the contagious sentiment of that of Jesus, who "was crucified, dead and buried." This paragraph in the Apostles' Creed gives the historical close of the life of Jesus.

As another has said "the last authentic utterance of the historical Jesus was his cry of despair on the cross."

They take us back from the Christ of the Church, and this is what they give us in its place. All the function of mediation left to Christ, is that which comes from his common earthly life,

through the activity of human memory. This mediation becomes less and less essential. As Martineau said: he is mediator, "*not instead of immediate revelation*, but simply as making us more aware of it and helping us to interpret it. For in the constitution of the human soul there is provision for an *immediate* apprehension of God."<sup>1</sup>

As to their non-miraculous Christianity, it would certainly necessitate a most corrosive revision of the creed and cult of every form of the Church. All worship of Christ, in hymn and sacrament, would have to be eliminated. All the warm glow of thanksgiving for our redemption through Him must needs be given up. All the moral life that comes from the belief that personality, human and divine are potencies above the mechanical universe would cease. The rational refusal to subordinate personality to impersonal mechanism, is the root and ground of all philosophical maintenance of what is termed the miraculous element in Christianity.

The vulgar miraculous, like all other vulgar things, is out of the order of the rational. But the miracles of personality—miracles connected with the natural supernaturalism of such a personality as that of Jesus, were possible, probable, necessary. Relatively to the mechanical conception of nature, and of man as a mechanical part of this nature, all truly human achievements are miracles. Again laws of nature are no longer reified as actual forces, but are held by scientific men to be generalized formula of description. No one has better disposed of Hume's argument against miracles than Professor Huxley.<sup>2</sup> That that which never has happened, never can happen—the gist of Hume's argument—would not now be accepted by any scientific men. If a man were to rise from the dead before their eyes, they would simply enlarge their formula—their natural law, their generalized statement, to include the new phenome-

<sup>1</sup> Martineau: *Seat of Authority in Religion*; p. 651.

<sup>2</sup> *Hume*, by Professor Huxley; Chap. VIII in *The English Men of Letters* series.

non, just as they do when a new planet swims into their ken. Vulgar ideas of miracles, and in the Bible apparently vulgar miracles may be found, but miracles of personality are in no sense vulgar or irrational. It is only when mechanical causality is reified and made the only efficient causality, that science can say a word against the possibility of miracles. And now that scientific men have eviscerated causality of all causal efficiency<sup>1</sup> the bug-bear of the impossibility is slain in the camp of science itself.

Historical Christianity was founded upon miracles of personality. The miraculous element is of its very *essence*, if we may use the term of Harnack. There never has been an actual, historical non-miraculous Christianity. Students of history may or may not believe in miracles. But when they come to study Christianity as an historical phenomenon they must study it as professedly founded on miracle. That is the only sort of Christianity that offers itself for their study. To evolve a conception of the *essence of Christianity*, or of the *religion of the spirit* from their subjective consciousness, and call it true Christianity is enough to bow them out of the consideration of all students of history. They have forsaken the realm of the positive, the actual, for the cloudlands of mere subjectivity. They are in the realm of illusions and delusions, in a dream world, where one dream is as little real as another—one view of religion as little verifiable and rational as another. But when they come to study actual Christianity they consider it as a mere dream, at best as a degenerate externalization of their own dream. This externalization, this husk of their dream-kernel they then treat under the concept of mechanical causality. They take its primitive form, and then trace its historical transformations as they would trace the transformation of heat into light, or of clay into bricks. The mechanism of thing and environment is their formula. Given a *this* and a certain environment, and a *that* is the mechanical result. All conception of a tele-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chap. IV, p.



ological development—if that be not a redundant formula, for all development is teleological—is forsaken. In fact all conception of development is replaced by the conception of degeneracy. This is the curious hybrid result of their separating and yet comingling of esoteric Christianity with historical Christianity.

Again, they treat the historical transformations of Christianity under mechanical conceptions. They find a certain sort of development of institutional Christianity, but comparing it with their esoteric Christianity, they pronounce it to be a lapse rather than a development. We demur to the treatment of any of the institutional acquisitions of man under the concepts of physical science—of thing and environment.<sup>1</sup> Mere physical causality even when it is reified as an actual power, is no creator of man and his institutions. In truth, no efficient causality can be thought except as an element in a final cause. The final cause is the true and abiding first cause. The banishing of final causes, as barren vestals, has been followed recently by the abandonment of real efficient causality by modern scientific thinkers. In this, they are but returning to the view of Hume, Comte and, for that matter of Kant too, who never really refuted Hume's view. We have only a succession of events in time, casually, but not causally related. But these writers still use the anthropomorphized conception of efficient causality. They take the earliest form of historical Christianity, and account for its transformations by the successive environment of Greek philosophy, Roman polity and pagan cult. Then they consider its first form to be its truest form, and all its transformations, lapses.

One who goes back to Aristotle, or to catholic philosophy of all ages, for his doctrines of causality and the nature of a thing, will never seek an explanation of any institution or creed in its earliest empirical form. Teleology is the highest form of causality, and the nature of a thing is seen only in its perfected or developed form. Hence the crab cry of "Back to ——;" back

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chap. IV of this volume.

to the first empirical form of anything as to its true form—the norm by which to test all subsequent transformations—is a cry that is logically a call back to an alogical view of the world, whose practical and logical result is that of pessimism.

Historically the first form of Christianity is what they would term a Jewish sect, founded upon relations to a Jewish Messiah. It is not true that the personal religion of Jesus, his sense of filial relation to God, constitutes the essence of Christianity and, in no historical sense, can it be called primitive Christianity. Its first form was that of the community of disciples of Jesus, founded upon belief in Him—not as a friend or brother or leader, but as the victorious, glorified Saviour, who still was redemptively present with them. One may grant, as the Church has always done, that there was a freshness, vigor and inspiration in this pristine form of Christianity that has scarcely ever been present in its later and fuller forms. Scanty creed and polity and cult were theirs, but such as they were, it has always been considered that they gave the historical germs for the later and fuller developments of historical Christianity. Yet primitive Christianity was not more than the germinating seed. All subsequent transformations have been either a development or a degeneracy, as the tree is either a development or a degeneracy of the seed. These writers take the latter view. Moreover, if Greek philosophy and Roman law and pagan cult, as environments, served only to deteriorate primitive Christianity, we must give up the conception of a divine Pedagogue in all pre-Christian history. We do not consider the soil and water and air—the environment of the seed—as hostile to its true development. We cannot believe in God in human history, and believe that all the extra-Christian achievements of the race were poisonous environments, hostile to the development of Christianity. The education of the race can be taken partially by no thinker, especially by any one using the conception of development. Any reversion to the primitive form of any living institution, any denial of the fostering function of environment as furthering

development of the germ, betrays the utmost artlessness of unscientific, unhistorical and unphilosophical comprehension. The organic connection of Christianity with Judaism is allowed. But how can any one who believes in a *Logos* in human history, decline to extend this organic conception to all the other enviroing achievements of the *Logos* in the human race.

The Greek Fathers of old, as Lessing and Hegel of modern times, voiced this conception of "the education of the race," each nation being given some specific task or lesson to learn, that in the fullness of the times they might all contribute to the catholic wisdom and welfare of the organic race. The Kingdom of heaven—the consummate flower of the education of the race—was likened by the Founder himself "to a seed that a man should cast into the ground, which groweth up, he knoweth not how, because the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself." He who made the seed made also the fertile earth into which he casts it in order that it may not retain its primitive, undeveloped form, but spring up and grow by taking nutriment from soil and air and sky. So historical Christianity grew and developed. The world was prepared for the seed. Greek philosophy, Roman law and pagan cults were the earth into which it was cast and from which it was to draw nutriment. As a matter of fact these others were more ready to receive Christianity than were the Jews. Greek philosophy was as instrumental in formulating the Nicene symbol, as the Jewish Messianic idea was in developing the Messianic role of Jesus. The same is true of all the other environments that have been instrumental in the developing transformations of historical Christianity. The Gospel has never been pure unincarnate spirit. It has expanded from that of a small Jewish sect into a world wide church, by means of fostering environments. Christianity has always been an embodied religion. To learn what Christianity is one must go to history. And going to history he finds it, not as an invisible essence, but as a nineteen century old and a world-wide organization that has drawn nutriment and made itself a growing

body from all the other attainments of the human spirit. But such a comprehensive non-puritanical conception of historical Christianity seems foreign to these writers. They are puritans of the most extreme form. They are mere subjectivists of the Neo-Platonic type. With them true Christianity is all in the heart, or all in the air. The secular is profane. It is the devil's, not God's world. All the historical developments of Christianity have been due to hostile environments. We must back to the personal religion in the heart of a Jewish peasant; back to the primitive form of the community that believed in Jesus as Messiah.

If we believe in development, we cannot take this *crab cry* too seriously. It represents at best our natural interest in the beginnings of things. But the beginnings are necessarily seen in the light of their developed form. We like to go back to the days of our childhood, to the times of the founding of any institution of which we are members. We venerate our ancestors. We idealize the temporal beginnings of our societies, because we are enjoying the fruition of them. We idealize the seed because we see the tree. Cold historical criticism, however, will never assent to the view that the primitive form of any institution is its most perfectly developed form. Apart from the refreshment of spirit that comes to us in the midst of the strenuous life of manhood, from going back to the idealized days of our childhood, there is no profit in looking backward rather than forward. Intellectually, the crab cry—back to the beginning of anything that is in a process of development—is irrational. We know what this crab-cry "Back to Kant" means. It means back to the first stage of his work, and a negating of his fuller development of other phases. It means back to the *First Critique*—back to the first stage of Kant's whole system; back to the negative side of that *Critique*. It means practically, back to an unspiritual, mechanical, materialistic interpretation of the universe. God, freedom and immortality, for which Kant's *whole* philosophy stood are thus dismissed, as the hybrid, degenerate forms

of his philosophy, by the *Neo-Kantianer*. We know Rousseau's crab-cry of "back to Nature from civilization." We know Von Hartmann's crab-cry of, back from consciousness into the unconscious, by cosmic suicide. We know all these crab-cries as voicing the belief in retrogression rather than in development in all human institutions. We know them, logically, as the fatigue forms of Orientalism in opposition to the strenuous forms of the Occident. So when we come to the crab-cry of these writers, "back to the primitive Gospel," back to the religion in the heart of Jesus, we may be prepared to find the same vicious error of abstraction. It is a taking of a part for the whole, a seed for the tree, an undeveloped for a developed form of Christianity. For the empirical origin of any institution is always a relatively undeveloped, imperfect form. The end is not yet, especially in the first stage. The end is real, and efficient, or there would be no development. The final cause is the real first cause, though in the order of the process, it is the last in the empirical realization of the true nature of anything. Either historical Christianity of to-day is a more developed form, or the concept of development applies to everything but to Christianity.

Again, this return to the primitive, is psychologically impossible. We cannot demodernize ourselves. We cannot return to primitive Christianity. We cannot Judaize ourselves, put ourselves into the states of consciousness of the early disciples. For better or worse, our consciousness is that of the modern world, into which Greek and Roman and Germanic elements have entered. No more indeed, we should add, can we absolutely modernize ourselves; repudiate those historical fibres that are not modern, and yet are very flesh of our flesh and spirit of our spirit. The spirit of the age, the modern spirit, is abstract and untrue when wrested from its organic continuity with the spirit of the ages.

The crab-cry is pathological and pessimistic. Psychologically it can never be realized. Christianity is what it has become. Nor can we go back to "the historic Christ." We can-



not "rediscover Christ." If there be no really ever-present Christ in his Church, no *Logos* in Christian history, then the only Christ that we can "rediscover" is the dead and buried Jesus. Back to Jesus who died and was buried; back to Jesus "whose last authentic utterance was his cry of despair on the cross." Back to him through the imperfect reproduction of historical memory—that is the utmost that this cry, "back to Jesus," can mean, unless we give rein to what is called the historical imagination. But that is just what critics fault tradition and the Church for doing—for giving idealized embellishments of empirical facts.

The historian, especially the historian who believes in the modern doctrine of development, should be the last one to make the crab-cry "back." Whatever the primitive historical form of any institution may have been, it must be, for the historical evolutionist, primitive, undeveloped, relatively more imperfect than its later and more developed forms. The truth in this cry, back to the primitive, one may well recognize. It is the truth that, for feeling, the first outburst of a new movement is warmer; for thought and action it is more inspired and heroic. If modern developed forms of Christianity could have the warm feelings and the inspired insights and the heroic energizing of primitive Christianity—could its length and breadth be multiplied by the intensive depth of the early community of Christians, there would come such a time of refreshing and strengthening of the Christian life as would make Christianity far more saving than it now is. But historical Christianity has always recognized this. Special inspiration and authority are accorded to the apostles. The Church has always bid men look back lovingly to these times. Her whole doctrine and cult are means to get men in touch with that warm inspiration of the primitive Church.

But historical Christianity has never been a mere copying of primitive Christianity. It has never been a holding fast to an unchangeable identity without perpetual, life-stimulating ele-

ments of difference. Its vital cry has not been, back into the womb, or forward into the tomb, but forward into new and fuller life.

This crab-cry finds its logical expression in Orientalism and in Von Hartmann's *Philosophy of the Unconscious*. All conscious personal life is a lapse from the Unconscious. Hence humanity's progress must be a backward one into the Unconscious. It is needless to expatiate upon the Oriental conception, even in the modern form that Von Hartmann gives it. We know that its heart is absolutely pessimistic in regard to all of humanity's hard earned forms of culture. We know that rigorous asceticism—repression of life, is its method for retrogression into the unconscious, and that "cosmic suicide" is its ideal goal.

This seems like comic philosophy in face of the world now marching gaily to the tune of progress. But in spite of the professedly regnant *Zeitgeist* of progress, one may detect much of the very opposite spirit in literature, and many forms of the reactionary spirit in all the spheres of modern life. It need only be noted that its heart is pessimistic, its head Oriental, its goal Brahm or Nirvanah, or non-existence of personality in the Unconscious.

This is the real "yellow peril" in our modern Occidental world. It is the spirit of the anti-Christ, the anti-logos, the anti-rational and the anti-progress view of the world, as a process of development towards full realization of humanity into a Kingdom or Republic of God on earth.

Everyone who is raising the *crab-cry* is flying in the face of our western form of civilization, and aiding and abetting the "yellow peril."

Even the cry "Back to Jesus"—to the historical Jesus, who lived and died and was buried centuries ago, means a negation of the hard earned forms of Christian culture of the intervening centuries. And, put it in the subjective form of the religious feeling that was in the heart of Jesus, as Sabatier and Harnack

do, it is a further reversion to the Oriental type; a large advance toward esoteric Buddhism. Harnack's lectures are professedly *ad populum academicum*, to those afflicted with the various ailments of modern culture. He does not, after all, take modern culture seriously. Or, he does, and he does not. But in devastating historical Christianity he runs into such utter subjectivism as leads logically, as it always historically has led, towards the Oriental, pessimistic view of man and the world. Rational authority there is none. The freedom of capricious feeling soon tires, and non-existence becomes a welcome goal. The freedom of Oriental thought is the freedom of non-existence—all forms of empirical, historical existence being bad.

Literally, back to anything means, and finally leads back to *blank*. And that is where the cry, back to the historical Jesus, and then, back to a personal feeling in the heart of one man out of millions of men—that is back to Jesus apart from historical Christianity, leads. It is back to a feeling of an unmediated relation to God—back to Neo-Platonic ecstasy—a swoon of man's rational nature, and then an awakening to a pessimistic view of reality—to despair and a longing to cease to be, a longing for Nirvanah, an absorption in Brahm, in the unconscious.

So back to Jesus of history—back to a Christ without historical Christianity—back to a filial feeling in the heart of Jesus—all this backwardness is one of negation that ends in nothing that we can know—nothing that can validate itself—a supersensuous something that eludes our grasp, and soon passes away into an illusory form of abnormal consciousness.

Again we note what a meagre view is left us of the historical Jesus by these puritanical critics, who would have a gospel without Christianity, and a Jesus without the Church's interpretation of his indwelling, energizing presence. They would fain "re-discover Jesus" by taking away all these interpretations of him. They see that St. John's and St. Paul's conceptions were interpretations, and taking these away; taking away all that anyone has thought and said about Jesus, they finally leave us with only

a few shreds of genuine Gospel history for a portrait of Jesus of Nazareth. But even then they must allow that Jesus interpreted himself in the light of a Messianic kingdom. This, however, is also to be eliminated as a mistaken view that he had as to his own person and work.

Let as little remain as their arbitrary ideal permits, we can easily see that the critics cannot so dis-conscious themselves as to avoid interpreting Jesus in light of their modern conceptions. At best they are only doing, as individuals, what the Church has done collectively. They cannot get back face to face with Jesus of Nazareth as he was, apart from what he is to them, as well as what he was to his early disciples. At best it is a choice of private, or of social interpretation. The social interpretation is age-long and corporate. The private interpretation is ephemeral.

We must say then, that we cannot have a Christ without Christianity. The historical Christ is the Christ of the Church. No mere recrudescence of the empirical man Jesus of Nazareth is possible, or, if possible, desirable. That would give us a dead and absent Christ, a Christ "after the flesh," so that we could only speak metaphorically of Christ present in our hearts. This could only mean the emotion roused in our hearts by the recall in memory of the meagre portrait of the historical Jesus left us by these critics.

We *must* interpret Jesus. There is no choice in the matter, if we would have any Jesus. The only choice is that between the subjective interpretation of individuals, and the objective one of the Church of the centuries. If we must be hypnotized, to speak in metaphor, we can choose between auto-hypnosis and that of the larger, objective form.

One who takes a historical view of any institution; one who wishes to get away from his subjective prejudices to an objective rational view, will demur to the peculiarly narrow and subjective view of Christianity held by Sabatier and Harnack. They both profess to treat the subject as historians. They do nothing of

the sort. Historians treat of actualities. They treat religion as an inner subjective feeling, spirit or essence. The historical parts of their books treat of historical actualities, which they consider as mere husks that do not even perform their function of husks, to protect and nurture the kernel.

There is no more specious falsehood than that which treats of *essence* as apart from its manifestation. It is just as abstract and untrue as that which takes the brute actual as the whole of reality. Essence is a category of relativity. It always relates itself to that of manifestation. An essence that does not appear, that does not manifest itself, show itself in objective form, is a mere will-o'-the-wisp that perverse subjectivists pursue, when they become pessimistic in regard to the world of actualities. It is not a sane or wholesome—not an objective or rational category when divorced from that to which it relates. So when one wishes to get at the bottom of things—at the ground or essence of religion apart from its historical manifestations, he is looking for an abstraction. Essence as ground is always a ground of existence. Existence springs from and takes up and preserves its ground, only in the form of actualities. Mere brute actualities—mere sensuous realities—well, they may also be will-o'-the-wisps of metaphysical scientists. But actualities are for intelligence always intelligent, purposive actualities. Any actuality is more concrete than its essence. It is at least a grade of reality and rationality. The essence is nothing but an abstraction that exists only in the more concrete form of actuality. A cause that has no effect, is no cause. An essence that has no manifestation is no essence. Mere potentiality is as good as nothing. It is in the actual, that the whole of its potency is manifested. What is not manifested must ever remain an unknown. An unuttered, un-outered essence is something that no rational mind can deal with—especially no historical student. The real is the actual, and every form of the actual is a phase or degree of the rational. It is the manifestation—the self-revelation of its own ground or essence, and of the whole of its essence. So



with all the categories of relativity—form and content, inner and outer, the whole and its parts. They are all abstractions. The concrete is the actual. The style *is* the man. The content *is* the form. The outer *is* the inner, its inmost outurance. The bad-acting man has not a good will, nor the selfish man a good heart. The good-will which wills nothing good, is as good as no will. Let us therefore have done with treating of religion under these abstract categories of essence; of the innner as opposed to the outer, of the kernel without the husk, of the spirit without the body. Let us treat of it as an actuality—a concrete unity of the inner and outer, of essence and manifestation; always remembering that an actuality is not a merely physical thing, but a self-utterance of some phase of reason.

The historical treatment of religion then, we insist, must be confined to its actualized forms.

It is true, that this has not the last and truest word to say in the matter. If we are to intellectually validate our religion, we shall have to go to the higher point of view of philosophy. We shall have to see what the real, ultimate Actual is, in the light of which we can see the degrees of reality to be found in all the forms of nature, and in all the institutions of humanity. That is, we shall have to rise to the plane where, "the real is the rational and the rational the real," in order to see the phase of reality in every form of actuality—matter, life, the institutions of the family, state and church.

Here we must find an ideal-actual First Principle, pure, Actuality—the *Actus Purus* of the scholastics—as the efficient and final cause of the whole process—of the whole historical development of the various forms of empirical actualities. As all development implies imperfection in that which is developing, it also implies a final cause or end or self-realized form, that is potent as an efficient cause of change from a lower to a higher form of empirical actuality. So a history of religions and a science of religion are always to be followed by a philosophy of religion, for its ultimate justification.

We may have a psychology of religion, or the psychological basis of religion with Sabatier, but that is no rational justification of religion, any more than a psychology of illusions is a justification of illusions. So, too, we may have a history of religion in all its forms, but that is no justification of religion in any form. When one comes to a validating of religion, and a justification of any form of it, one is forced to the philosophical point of view. But neither Sabatier nor Harnack rises to that plane. They remain on the psychological and historical plane. Man is by nature—using nature in the ordinary sense of the term—a religious being. Psychologically, he cannot help being religious, even if he be an atheist. Historically, this psychological necessity manifests itself in various forms. An ideal of the essence of religion is set up, by which to criticise all forms of the manifestation of this psychological necessity. This ideal is purely a subjective one—a personal feeling, a nondescript form of emotion—at best a symbolical form of representation, as the sense of filial relation to the Heavenly Father—a symbol of man's relation to the Great Unknowable. This forthwith is taken as the *essence* of Christianity. Then every form or historical manifestation of Christianity is invalidated, because it has outerances of more concrete reality. What is “the essence of Christianity?” asks, Harnack. What is “the religion of the Spirit” as utterly opposed to all religions of authority? asks Sabatier. Their answer is, that it is not historical Christianity—not any form of actual Christianity, but an essence that is impotent to outer itself.

Their object is to reconcile religion with the modern scientific view of the universe. But this scientific view always treats of historical objective actualities. Their reconciliation—under the specious guise of the abstract categories of essence and spirit—consists in an elimination of objective actualities, and a placing of religion in the sphere of what, to science, is subjective and illusory. Science remains, but religion is in the realm of ne-

science, which is, for a rational man, the realm of non-entity—of fiction, not of fact.

To justify intellectually any human activity, even though it be a psychological necessity, one must rationalize it. They put religion beyond the realm of rationality, and appeal only to feeling—to a capricious subjective emotion, of which science and modern culture give anything but a rational justification. Their whole contention seems to be that religion cannot be manifested; that it is an inner essence that cannot outer itself; that every form of its manifestation is an impotent attempt at self-expression—a devolution rather than an evolution. We are not concerned to identify any and every stage of an evolution with the goal and finished product. But we must appreciate each phase as a stage in a process that is a progress.

The estimation of the degree of reality, belonging to any phase of a developing process, belongs to philosophy. Philosophy does not construct religion or any other form of human institution, but it must seek to construe it, to see its place in the organic system.

Science and history deal with objective actualities. They have the first word to say, if not the last, as to what Christianity is, as an historical actuality.

So we may insist that these writers should have at least the historical spirit and that they treat religion fairly on the standpoint of modern scientific culture—that they deal with Christianity as an historical actuality. If Harnack did this he would answer his question, "What is Christianity," by saying that it is historical Christianity, in all its diverse forms of manifestation. That of course is not the ultimate answer, but it is the only answer that is allowable from the historical and scientific view of the matter. Of an inner spirit, an unactualized essence, neither history nor science can take any account.

When we come to the philosophical point of view, we can criticise every actual form of Christianity, because every form of the empirical actual is in a process of development, and

therefore in an imperfect form. We can say that "the Christianity of men has always been profoundly inferior to the Christianity of God"; that the absolute religion has never had historical form, but that all forms have been developments toward and through the absolute religion—the at-one-ment of man with God. But the final cause is always a non-empirical cause—one with which strict science has no concern, and philosophy all concern.

The personal religion that Jesus had, his conscious sinless unity with the Father—that is not historical Christianity. Christianity is the religion founded upon the person and work of Jesus, whose ultimate aim is to bring all men into this conscious sinless relation to God. To that end Christ gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying (developing, upbuilding) of his body, the Church, till all together come unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we "may grow up (develop) into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." (Ephesians iv, 11-15). In its first historical form, Christianity may have been little more than a Jewish sect, as these writers hold it to have been. But the whole history of Christianity has been a development into wider and higher forms—soon taking its place as a world-religion on its way to take its place as *the* world-religion. The subjective religion that Jesus had, was not Christianity. Historically his personal religion was the Jewish religion. He was a conformist. The Son of God became the son of man, that He might make the sons of men sons of God and brethren in his corporate kingdom. The history of Christianity shows the process of this work. Its historical transformations are stages in this edifying process. The final end or purpose of the Saviour's work abides as a measure of progress, and as a standard by means of which we may see that one phase of this development is a higher stage than another.

Christianity has never been all in the air, or all in mere sub-

jective feeling. It has never been an unincarnate spirit—an essence without manifestation, a soul without a body. Surely historical students with such full appreciation of the modern scientific view of reality should be the last to take this merely subjective view of any human institution.

A true development implies both the transformation and elevation of a primitive form. Let Sabatier and Harnack make as little as they do of the primitive form of Christianity, they are bound to make more of its historical transformations than they do. A developing form never retains, and can never go back to, its primitive form. The transformations then must have been for the better or the worse. If for the worse, as they contend, then one can only speak of the devil rather than of God in history—at least in Christian history. Historical Christianity has never identified the Church militant with the Church triumphant. That is the goal, toward which it is always making, perhaps at best, certainly at least, asymptotical progress. Its movement toward that one far-off divine event is at least the living logic of its transformations. Let historical students have done with this irrational talk about Christianity as a mere essence. Let them study historical Christianity as a developing form of actuality. Let them take religion in its objective, historical, concrete form of creed and cult, and discipline and organization; as the manifestation and the nurturing of Christian life.

(1) They will find that "back to Jesus," means back to a Jewish *Messiah*, the founder of a kingdom of heaven on earth—or rather the one, who, as the culmination of the Jewish form of the kingdom, sought to fulfill it in higher form. The central teaching of Jesus was concerning this fuller coming of the kingdom on earth. The fuller coming of the kingdom was organically related with and rooted primarily in the historical religion of his own nation. It is the wildest sort of historical insanity, to read into His words: "the Kingdom of God is within (*ἐντός*) you," a modernized subjective conception of an in-



visible kingdom. "*Within you*" is historically as well as grammatically to be translated "in your midst," just as Jesus himself was then in their midst. That was the "good news," the essence, if you will, of the gospel. It was a kingdom on earth. It was to be objective and social, as we see from most of the parables of Jesus.

(2) They will learn that back to primitive Christianity means back to a religious *community*, founded upon the person and work of Jesus and that, not upon the merely historical Jesus of Nazareth, who died and was buried, but upon the risen and glorified Christ. Not for a moment in the organic life of Christianity through the centuries, has it ever rested upon the Jesus of history—if the term history be taken in its empirical sense. It was not upon the memories of a Jesus *who had* been, but upon relations with a Christ who was then and there, that Christianity became a religion. They will also find that creed and polity and cult are essential elements of Christianity.

(3) Then they will trace all the historical transformations of this primitive form of Christianity, as stages of development of its fullness and totality of life; stages of development of this religious movement within the Jewish religion into the form and power of a universal religion. They will acknowledge the impossibility of any living institution forever keeping its primitive undeveloped form. They will then cease to regard the whole development of the organization, doctrine and worship of Christianity as foreign to its essence, or as a progressive degeneration. Their only care will be to see how the Church has always had at heart the continuity of concrete Christianity in its expansive forms of life in new ages and circumstances. In a word, they will treat the history of Christianity as they would treat any other religion or institution, under the concept of development rather than under that of degeneracy. Christianity never has been a mere essence, a soul without a body, a mind without a creed, a will without a deed. Like all life it institutes

and organizes itself and adapts its environment to itself—else it dies.

Christianity then is, for the historical student, that which the Church has thought and done through the centuries of its existence.

If they cannot accept Christianity's own interpretation of itself; if they have not a philosophy of history that will justify its expanding forms of life, they will at least treat it as a development of one phase of the psychological necessity for men to be religious, though a psychological necessity need not be a rational necessity. Christianity's own interpretation is, in brief, the following: The Eternal Son of God, the Eternal, immanent Logos was incarnated in Jesus. He entered personally into the limitations of human life—lived, worked, taught, died, was buried, rose again from the dead, was excarnated and glorified. But the living Christ established a kingdom, sent the Holy Spirit to inspire and enlighten in the work of upbuilding this kingdom. His divine work is continued in and through the historical media of his earthly kingdom. That kingdom is not a body without a soul. Christ is its soul—an ever living, ever present, ever working Christ. Nor is it a soul without a body. It is an extension of the incarnation. What the body of Jesus was to the incarnate Logos, that his kingdom has ever continued to be, a progressive reincarnation of the perfect man. Its limitations are those common to every historical form of existence, just as the body of Jesus was subject to the limits of temporal existence—limits as to health, life, omniscience, omnipotence. The child Jesus "grew and waxed strong in spirit," he "*increased* in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man."<sup>1</sup> He was subject unto his parents,<sup>2</sup> was made "perfect through sufferings."<sup>3</sup> So, too, the Church on earth, while never identifying itself with the Church triumphant, has ever held herself

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke's Gospel, II, vv. 40 and 52

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, V. 51.

<sup>3</sup> Epistle to the Hebrews, II, v. 10.

to be the earthly medium for the continuous inworking of the *Logos* into humanity. She has sought to be a religion of authority, because she tries to express and spread abroad the religion of the Spirit, under historical limitations. She has had no other motive for her existence than the preservation and propagation of the gospel—the good news of a kingdom of God on earth. Often she has been untrue to her own principles, unfaithful to her trust and degenerate in her life. But she has the perpetual presence of the *Logos* to recall her from her wanderings and reform her of her abuses. Her belief in the perpetual presence of the living Christ is vastly different from that of any merely idealized memories of an historical, a dead Jesus, however uniquely religious and holy he may have been. She has ever regarded herself only as a vestibule to the perfected kingdom, hence as a provisional and transitional and developing organization; recognizing that the working of the immanent *Logos* is subject to all the conditions of historical existence. Her cry has never been “back to a past Christ,” but rather that of “life in the present Christ and, through this, forward into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,” gradually “increasing in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.”

Such, briefly, is the Church's interpretation of itself. Such is its philosophy of Christian history. Then the Church justifies her own existence and rationalizes her own authority as an *ecclesia docens*, the earthly medium or body for housing and educating and extending the religious relation of man—or rather of men, with God. For in no historical form has she ever taken the purely subjective, individualistic view held by Harnack and Sabatier. The Church has always been a social institution, a corporate body, with corporate aims, creeds and worship.

However little the *empirical* form of the historical method<sup>1</sup> can accept the Church's own interpretation of herself, it is bound to treat the Church as it does any other form of a developing

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chap. IV, p.

institution. But that is what neither Harnack nor Sabatier does. Their method resembles that of an anatomist of a dead body, or, at best, that of a student of biology, faulting the growing form for changing; faulting the full grown man for not having remained a child, every stage of growth being abnormal, and the whole process a putrefaction, or at best a petrifaction.

With the *philosophical* form of the historical method<sup>1</sup> all the facts as to the various transformations of Christianity which they bring out, are fully accepted. All the results of Biblical criticism, of historical investigations, of modern culture in general are approved, so far as they are proved. But the interpretation of these facts is vastly different. The exponents of this other school have an optimistic, because they have a rational, philosophy of history. The world is not a progressionless procession nowheres in particular. It is not an eternal identity of a fixed sum of matter or force always equated in every form of their changes. The rather it is a process, through, and to the rational. The physical and the mechanical are imbedded in the metaphysical and teleological. Or rather the metaphysical is immanent in the physical. There is logic, reason in its full concrete sense, in all history. History is a development towards something—a far-off divine consummation. This final destination is an immanent final cause, the only efficient cause that anyone reading history as rational can assume.

Science now dispenses with any efficient causality. Philosophy restores the abandoned concept of causality under the form of final cause. The history of man thus viewed, is a process that is a progress into freedom, because it is a process into rationality—a process of man's freedom to act, not as he pleases, but in accordance with the authority of reason; a process of man into the freedom of God's service.

Just what reason is, what are the forms of God's service may, historically, vary; nay must vary, in a process which is a devel-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chap. IV of this volume.

opment. The spirit is ever, historically, in a body; the *Logos* is ever, historically, incarnated. The philosophic form of the historical method then seeks the logic, the reason, the ever increasing manifestation of its first constitutive principle in historical forms. It views the history of the sons of men becoming, corporately, the sons of God; as an education of the race under the Divine Pedagogue. It studies the history of all human achievements as the outerances, under historical limitations, of the immanent *Logos*. It studies the specifically sacred in the same way that it does the nominally secular. It studies the history of religion, and the history of every religion in the same genetic way.

When it comes to Christianity, it falters not in seeing it organically related to other religions and, much less, at seeing the logic, the reason in all its historical transformations. It takes up all its empirical events—the life of Jesus of Nazareth, the founding of a Jewish sect, the Hellenization of this sect, the Romanizing and the Germanizing of it. It takes Christianity to be what it has become through all these historical transformations, as a developed form of primitive Christianity. Refusing to read any history as merely secular, much less does it refuse to read Christian history as being alogical. It accepts, as material for its interpretation, all that modern research and criticism have to offer as proved. But it declines their merely empirical analysis when presented as the synthesis, the life, the soul, the reason of the whole process. It declines mere individualism in favor of the corporate view of man in his religious relation, as well as in his specific relation to intellectual reason.

Neither religion nor abstract reason is a private possession or acquisition. Both are social, corporate products. And both are validated only under the metaphysic of an immanent principle or *Logos* in the historical processes of their attainment. Unassisted reason in the individual is a fiction. So, too, is unassisted religion. But corporate forms of both are validated only by a sufficient final cause. The merely phenomenal causes of



empirical facts are never sufficient causes. Non-rational, and non-moral, and non-religious, phenomenal causes can never validate reason nor morality nor religion. In their corporate forms they must still be incorporated into the superphenomenal, the metaphysical, the First and Final Cause to be seen even as progressive forms of reason.

In some form, the conception of the incarnation of the Divine *Logos*, some conception of the immanent energizing in the process of a transcendent First Cause, must be used in interpreting any phenomenal change as a development. Still even, the end is not yet. The actual in any process is not yet the rational, and yet every form of the empirical actual is a phase of the rational, or else we must throw away the whole conception of evolution. We cannot, then, take the twentieth century view of what is scientific or rational as ultimate. The fortieth century, perhaps the twenty-first century, may pronounce as severe judgment upon the views of modern culture and science as we do upon those of the Middle Ages. Doubtless we are *not* the people and wisdom will *not* perish with us. Doubtless we are "foremost in the files of time," yet we

"Doubt not through the ages one *increasing* purpose runs,  
And the thoughts of men are *widened* by the process of the suns."

The *Zeitgeist* of any *Zeit* is temporal. It has its truth and reality only as a phase of the immanent *Logos* in an historical process, but the end is not yet. And yet the present is, only because the Absolute is; because it is a phase of the absolute in historical process.

Here we are brought face to face with a choice of Hercules. We have a process. But a process of what and to what? If we take modern science in the metaphysical sense of some of its expounders, we have a process of change of a fixed lot of empirical factors; that is, a change of the collocations of these factors, matter, force, ether, electrons—a convolution, a devolution, a transformation, but eternally the same old realities—old friends or foes with new faces. Identity reigns. Difference is logically

bowed out, and we are in a world of process which is chaos instead of Cosmos. The cyclic theory of the Stoics is the utmost possible. Things, institutions, rise, ripen and rot, and then the process begins anew. There is nothing new under the sun, at least nothing new that shall not be resolved into the old—the eternally real matter, or force, or electrons, or the fixed quantity of physical energy in the physical universe. Farewell then to any centuries' statement of reason or reality. Farewell alas! to our twentieth century view. Farewell, in fact, to reason, if reason be not immanent in all the physical and historical processes of the universe. To this pass, all modern scientific metaphysics is brought. There is no possible avoiding the issue. Either immanent reason, *Logos* or final cause is in the process, or the process is processionless, or at best cyclic.

The other choice is the philosophical one—that reason, final cause, efficient purpose is immanent in all phenomenal changes, causal of these changes being a development—a process towards a goal, stages in humanity's realization of its real self, phases of rationality and of reality in the process.

Under this philosophical conception, then, every phase of actuality must pass for judgment as to its validity. Religion is certainly one of the phenomena of history. I mean by religion, not the subjective feeling in the heart, but an objective, historical, concrete form of human activity. Christianity is a positive, historical form of religion, claiming to be ultimate in its principles, but only relative in its development. Can the claim be validated? Certainly not on the view of empirical metaphysics. In fact, nothing can be validated—not even the views of modern science and culture. All are but meaningless transformations of irrational elements.

What validation, if any validation there can be, on the philosophical standpoint? The claim of actual Christianity, that is, of historical Christianity, is modest enough. It is only the claim to be the relative realization, in historical processes, of

the Absolute religion. It is only the claim to be the organic, corporate, foremost phase in religion. It is only the claim to be the ever expanding form—the ever growing incarnation of the religious relation of humanity to its primal source and final end. Even its creedal claims are all in the sphere of the process. Its *quod ubique, quod semper et quod ab omnibus creditum est, hoc est proprièque catholicum*, is always professedly within the realm of development—static stages of a dynamic process, and hence never absolutely infallible and ultimate.

To read Christian history in the light of this philosophical view, is simply an attempt to trace the concrete logic in a mass of phenomenal events—a mass of feelings, fancy, imagination, of human creeds and deeds—of phenomenal facts. It is to take religion concretely—to take Christianity historically, objectively, externally, if you will, and then to interpret it rationally, as the highest phase of religious actuality. It is not to take some abstract, subjective, individualistic feeling: some modern's enlightened view as to its essence. For it has always been too potent to be mere essence. It has always been forceful enough to be a manifestation; to be a visible actuality. It has always been a corporate, institutional concrete form of phenomenal actuality. It has always been something objective, of which the scientific and historical student can take cognizance. It stands forth in the phenomenal world on a *par* with all the political and social institutions of humanity. As such, it submits to the same rational criticism. How much reason in it, how much reality? Not how much abstract reason of the eighteenth or the twentieth century, but how much of the absolute Reason does it embody, incarnate, manifest? Concretely and historically, it consists of creed and polity and cult, as all religions have done. Concretely, it has been corporate, not individualistic. Concretely, it has been a development, not a fixed identical quantity. Concretely, it has been—well, let us say life—but a life that has not been mere essence, but a life with a body. It has been a life that has

mingled with, and modified all the concrete relations of man—his domestic, social, political; his artistic and philosophical activities. It has been a forceful force, a potent potency. Organized, as all life is organized, it has yet spread its organic filaments into art, literature, politics—into all the truly human forms of self-activity. No merely modern enlightened form of culture can pick out an abstract element and call it the *essence* of Christianity. Its attempt to do so must de-rationalize all its work. Christianity is what it is. It is what it is, because of what it has become. But, finally, it has become what it is not, because of phenomenal cause, which are now eviscerated of real causality in science, but because of the final cause; because of the goal; because of the immanence of this cause in phenomenal processes. *Aut Caesar aut nullius*. Either the empirical or the philosophical conception of reason and rationality; either the mechanical or the teleological conception of nature and of man and his history. The teleological easily accepts, takes up and fulfills the mechanical, but the mechanical can never take up and fulfill the teleological. The war is to the knife, disguise it as we may with our ephemeral reconciliations of religion with science. *Aut Caesar aut nullius*. Either metaphysical science or scientific metaphysics. That it is the question narrowed to a point. It is the choice of Hercules. It is the choice between reason and unreason, between fate and freedom, between relative gnosticism and absolute agnosticism. Let the issue be plainly stated. Let the empirical scientific metaphysic be not glossed with conceptions of an anthropomorphic nature; let the rigorous scientific view of reason and reality be stated in bald, actual form, and the choice then becomes a *pro* and *con*, between a logical and an alogical principle; between, let us say plainly, between a divine process in temporal conditions, and a fortuitous concourse of atoms, a fortuitous change within empirical matter, force, ether, electrons or whatever the latest empirical analysis may show to be

the one phenomenal reality, masquerading under the diverse forms of nature and humanity.

We are brought to the pass either to hold that science is merely descriptive of phenomenal changes for a practical end, having nothing to say about ultimate reality, as its foremost representatives grant, or to hold that science is unhumanitarian and atheistic. There is no possible dodging of the issue. *Aut Caesar aut nullius*, say both empirical and philosophical metaphysics. Let those who are afflicted with the ailments of modern culture; with their hesitancy, say, to be religious, not be caught by the glamour thrown over their metaphysics by some popularizers of science. Instead of taking modern science for what it is, let them take it as metaphysics. Then let them have the courage of their convictions and the confessions of *Physicus*<sup>1</sup> will be their confession—their creed, in the light of which beauty, goodness and truth cease to have any real reality. As students of the objective, we are not concerned merely with the religious interpretation of experience; but with the philosophical view, in the light of which nature and man and all human institutions are to receive their evaluations. This view comes, by reflective analysis of concrete experience, to something above any empirically given factors. It rises from the dependent to the independent, from the passively causal to the *causa sui*, from the part to the whole, from the phenomenal to the noumenal, from the mechanical to the Final Cause, from the irrational to the Absolutely Rational, from the chaos in whatever transitory form it may assume, to Cosmos, and from Cosmos, let us say frankly, to an immanent *Logos* that is also a transcendent Deity. The dialectic of all forms of reason, of all categories of finite thought force us to this ultimate category of absolute concrete reason—God. Or the penalty is that of reversion to the Oriental conception—Brahm, the Unconscious, the unknown Unknowable of Spencer.

Thought is capable of the *ascensio mentis ad Deum*. Plato

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix. Note 4.



has shown this in his *Republic* (Bks. VI and VII) and Aristotle in his *Metaphysics* (Book XI). In fact this is the contention of all positive, catholic philosophy. All men acknowledge grades of knowing. Science passes far beyond the stage of sense-perception. It uses the relating categories of the understanding in its marvelous work of describing the physical universe as such. Philosophy goes on to study the presuppositions of such a description. The limits of physics demand a metaphysic. The temporal, the spatial and all things therein are, as such, finite. The finite implies the infinite—is only finite in virtue of the infinite. All admit this, but the parting of ways is at the question of *knowing* this implicate of the finite. Spencer asserts its existence, power and universality but denies that it is knowable; denies that thought has any power to transcend the finite. Knowledge is confined to the limits of the sensuous by Kant in his *First Critique*, and he never gets beyond the maintenance of the faculty of faith as the organ of communication with God and spiritual realities. Faith is not a potency of reason and so cannot give knowledge. This negative side of Kant is the side that is taken by the *Neo-Kantianer*—by those who have raised the cry of “Back to Kant,” back from philosophy to agnosticism—back to agnostic realism of sensuous phenomena from the realism of the Absolute Reason.

The root difficulty with both Sabatier and Harnack is that they have been caught with this Neo-Kantian agnosticism. We cannot *know* God. Knowledge is only of the sensuous. We can only feel and believe in the Unknowable Absolute as a Father. We can act as if there was a God, if it conduces to our welfare. We can be pragmatists, not intellectualists, in all the higher activities of humanity. In a way, philosophy is to blame for this. It is to blame so far as it defines reason as the merely abstract reason of the understanding. Against this view of reason, Kant in his *Second Critique*, and modern pragmatists are right. But when reason is conceived concretely; when knowing is not merely discursive; when thought has its full sweep,

all that agnostics and pragmatists contend for is allowed. Philosophy, as such, is only the most concrete rational knowledge of the same data that sense and science deal with. It is a knowledge of their implications and necessary presuppositions. The ultimate presupposition of all finite knowledge is absolute knowledge; of all finite reality, absolute reality; of all finite consciousness, absolute Self-consciousness. And this pre-supposition is knowable by thought. Being known, the descent from it to an interpretation of the time and space process follows as a necessity. It is known as God's world. He is its first and final cause. From Him, in Him and towards Him all creation lives and moves and has its being. All temporal actualities are interpreted *sub specie aeternitatis*. They are in a process from and to the Perfect. The process is teleological. It is thus that it is logical. Any other view leaves all knowledge and reality to be alogical. Any other view turns even the gnosticism of sense and science into agnosticism—leaves us in the realm of things and relatives and processes, that are relative to an unknowable. This of course is alogism, non-rationality. Thought out fully and clearly then, we have the intellectual scepticism of Hume—a scepticism that he applied to common sense and science as well as to philosophy. The validity of thought, logic, knowledge in any interpretation of the universe rests upon the reality of the immanent *Logos*. It is an intellectual surprise when we find Harnack to say, "the way we conceive the world and ethics does not point to the existence of any λόγος at all."<sup>1</sup> This must have been a slip of the pen of a ready writer. For with such a conception, all logic is bowed out of the world and out of discussions. In fact, the point at issue with Harnack is the only point at issue between speculative thought, and historical Christianity. That point is the identification of the eternal λόγος with the historical Christ. The Church has always made this identification. It was founded

<sup>1</sup> Harnack's *Essence of Christianity*, p. 220.

upon it. The doctrine of the Incarnation—the whole of her Christology, is the speculative interpretation of Jesus of Nazareth—not as a “particular person who appeared in time and space relations,” but as a particular man who lived and died and was buried and rose again—the excarnation completing the process begun in the incarnation. Harnack faults the Church here for corrupting “the apostolic heritage with Greek philosophy.” But if Greek philosophy was also a lesson taught by the same Divine Pedagogue that taught the Jews their religion, this interpretation of Christ was but a unification of knowledge. When thought comes to reflect upon the phenomena of history; when it becomes a philosophy of history—the highest intellectual interpretation of time and space phenomena—it is compelled to deny an immanent *Logos* and thus commit suicide, or to make the identification.

Thus we find Hegel, the very incarnation of philosophy, making the same identification that the Church has done.<sup>1</sup> The mere personal opinion of Hegel, as well as that of John Stuart Mill, is of no worth. It is only a question of speculative thought and of its interpretation of the time and space process, into a higher form of knowledge than that of mere sense perception or science. If religion is to be not only a psychological experience, but is to receive a rational interpretation and validation, we cannot remain on the plane of Neo-Kantian agnosticism as Sabatier and Harnack do. And we must either simply live the Christian life, and abstain from any attempt at intellectual justification of it, or we must transcend the agnosticism that makes any such justification impossible. Sabatier and Harnack have done neither.

<sup>1</sup> Hegel's *Philosophy of History*, pp. 336-338.

## CHAPTER III

### LOISY

From the subjective, non-historical view of Christianity given by Sabatier and Harnack, let us turn to the objective view presented by Abbé Loisy, in his two volumes.<sup>1</sup>

The first book of this erudite French theologian has been as warmly welcomed by many liberal Catholics in Europe, as expressing their own view of the Church of their birth and their love, as it has been reprobated by the Roman hierarchy. It voices the views of the Liberals, who are accused of what ultramontanists stigmatize as *l'américanisme*—an accusation that led to the prohibition of Mivart's views and, finally to his excommunication and death. *L'américanisme* has been officially condemned, but it is a vigorous and growing school of thought in the Roman Catholic Church. It bids fair to become dominant in the future, unless Rome has forgotten her cunning of flexibility and of bowing in due time, to the inevitable.

Loisy's book is professedly a polemic against Protestantism as represented—or rather misrepresented, by Sabatier and Harnack.

Primitive Christianity and modern Christianity are two very different things. What is the bond of identity that unites them? That is the common problem of all three writers. As to the facts of the transformations of primitive Christianity by historical environments, they are all three at practical agreement. As to the interpretation of Christianity, as thus transformed by successive environments, they are at sword's-point! Loisy hold-

<sup>1</sup> *L'Evangile et L'Eglise*, Paris, 1902. *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, Paris, 1903.

ing it to have been a legitimate development, the others a degeneracy. Loisy had been, since 1881, Professor of Hebrew in the *Institut Catholique* in Paris. The students of Saint-Sulpice were forbidden to attend his lectures, after the publication of his book on "Chaldean Myths of the Creation and the Deluge." In 1893 he was deprived of his chair in the *Institut Catholique*, and appointed chaplain to a girl's school. His health broke down. He had to resign his chaplaincy and the meagre salary which was his only support. It was during this time that he wrote, under the name of *Firmin*, the articles, of which *L'Evangile et L'Eglise* is the ripest result. He had been forbidden to continue these in articles in 1900.

Finally he was appointed to a chair at the *Ecole des Hautes Etudes*, where he enjoys academical freedom. At present he is said to be the recognized head of an important school of Catholic thought, which is making headway in France, Italy, Austria, Belgium, and the United States.

Like Sabatier, Loisy finds it "a psychological necessity to bring his religious consciousness into harmony with his general culture." With Sabatier religion is his *inner* religious feeling, while with Loisy it is religion on its objective, institutional side. He accepts, like Sabatier and Harnack, the general results of the most advanced historical and Biblical criticism. Loisy says that he has chosen Cardinal Newman for his guide. He takes up again Newman's idea of the development of Christianity, in order to oppose the views of Sabatier and Harnack. His own work lacks the personal interest and the special pleading form of Newman's. He writes as an historian, not as Newman did, with the soul of a religious devotee and a scholastic partisan. To read Newman's book to-day is a task of drudgery, enlivened only by the humor of his supposing himself to have the judicial temper, the historical sense and sound logic. But he is quite devoid of both the historical spirit and method, that are so evident in the work of Loisy. Newman refers to De Maistre and Moeller as using the same principle, *i. e.*, "that the increase and



expansion of the Christian creed and ritual, and the variations that have attended the process in the case of individual writers and churches, are the necessary attendants on any philosophy or policy which takes possession of the intellect and heart, and has had any wide or extended dominion; that, from the nature of the human mind, time is necessary for the full comprehension and perfection of great ideas; and that the highest and most wonderful truths, though communicated to the world once for all by inspired teachers, could not be comprehended all at once by the recipients, but, as received and transmitted by minds not inspired and through *media* which were human, have required only the longer time and deeper thought for their full elucidation. This may be called the Theory of Development.”<sup>1</sup>

In Chapter I Newman lays down as distinctive tests between Development and Corruption:

- (1) Preservation of Type or Idea.
- (2) Continuity of Principles.
- (3) Power of Assimilation.
- (4) Early Anticipation.
- (5) Logical Sequence.
- (6) Preservative Additions.
- (7) Chronic Continuance.

Then follows the application of these tests in an absolutely unhistorical way—the quoting of this and that Father, or Church decree—*i. e.*, the dogmatic method of using uncritically whatever tradition seems good to illustrate and thus prove (*sic*) the thesis in hand.

Loisy's first book is professedly a polemical criticism of the point of view of Harnack and Sabatier. Against their constant contention that nearly every step forward in the history of the Church, has been an apostasy from the pure essence, he maintains that these steps constitute, for the historian, the manifestation of the real essence of Christianity.

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, p. 27.

It is needless to go into detail as to the historical transformation of the meagre remnant of the Gospel history, allowed to be genuine by all three of these writers. Loisy looks on these transformations as natural and necessary developments, as those of the tree from the seed and environment. With Harnack and Sabatier, the favorite metaphor for describing these transformations, is that of a stream issuing from a pure fountain, being discolored and polluted by the soils through which it flows, and by the uncongenial waters of the tributaries that flow into it. We may admit that, in one point of view, the Christianity of men has always been profoundly inferior to the personal religion of Jesus. This praise is accorded to Jesus by even those who regard him as purely human, and deny the whole ecclesiastical interpretation of the Person and work of the Christ as Saviour and Redeemer of men. Certainly every form of Christianity to-day, differs from that of the Gospels. And each one must either justify itself, or an absolute return be made to the most primitive form—an historical and moral impossibility.

As to the facts of the Gospel story, Loisy allows much of our Gospels to be an idealization of Jesus and his words and works, produced spontaneously in the consciousness of his disciples. An atmosphere of faith and love was the source of the idealized Jesus that we find in the Gospels. In his second book he refers to the Old Testament miracles which he says, "the historian can only recognize as memories, idealized by faith,"<sup>1</sup> and adds that a like historical criticism is to be applied to the New Testament.<sup>2</sup> Thus he leaves as few shreds of genuine history as to the words and works of Jesus as do the others. His destructive criticism of the Gospel is more fully set forth in his view of the unhistoricity of most of the Fourth Gospel. Thus he says that "the narratives of St. John are not a history, but a mystic contemplation of the Evangelist; his

<sup>1</sup> *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> The same, p. 43.

discourses are theological meditations upon the mystery of salvation.”<sup>1</sup> Again, “the Fourth Gospel is a book of mystical theology where one hears the voice, not of the historic Christ, but that of the Christian consciousness.”<sup>2</sup>

His difference from them is in his method of interpreting these facts, in the course of their historical effects.<sup>3</sup>

In Chapter II of his first book we find his most important divergence from the others, as to the idea of the Kingdom of Heaven. While they make it to be within the soul of the disciple, he lays stress on the assumption of the Messianic *rôle* by Jesus. He thinks that Jesus took an objective view of this kingdom, and throws doubt on the authenticity of the words “the Kingdom of God is within you,” (St. Luke, xviii, 21),<sup>4</sup> allowing that at best “within” (ἐντός) should be translated “amongst” or “in the midst,” *au milieu*, in which he is correct. The Gospel is subordinated to the kingdom, as the sphere in which it is to grow. Pardon, peace and love are means of entrance into this objective kingdom.

But he protests that “the historian ought to resist the temptation to modernize the idea of the kingdom.”<sup>5</sup>

The historic Jesus was a Jew, and held the Jewish conception of the Messianic kingdom, though gradually purifying it; which purification he continued after his resurrection and ascension (in the hearts and minds of his disciples). For I cannot find that Loisy allows more to the resurrection and glorification of Jesus, than an act of faith in the souls of his bereaved disciples.<sup>6</sup> He practically agrees with Harnack in distinguishing between the Easter message and the Easter faith. The

<sup>1</sup> *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> P. 130.

<sup>3</sup> *Autour d'un Petit Livre*. pp. 61-68.

<sup>4</sup> *L'Evangile et L'Eglise*, p. 55.

<sup>5</sup> The same, p. 56.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *L'Evangile et L'Eglise*, 117-123.

message is, an *empty tomb*, "He is not here," and the *faith* is, "He is risen." There is no proof of the corporal resurrection of Jesus that is valid, from the historical point of view. It was in the atmosphere of faith in the souls of the disciples, that we must seek *Easter faith*—"He is risen." "I believe that I have demonstrated that the resurrection of the Saviour is not a fact of history, as was the terrestrial life of Christ."<sup>1</sup> Again he denies that the Divinity of Christ can be proved from the Gospels. He attributes some of the supposed proof texts to later idealizations of his disciples, and others he interprets in the light of Jesus' messianic rôle. The Jesus of history lived and died as Messiah. He rose again as Lord, Saviour, Son of God, *Logos* and God—in the *faith* of his disciples and in the interpretation of the Church during the first four centuries. "The question in the time of Jesus was not, 'Is He God,' but 'Is He the Messiah?' The Divinity of Christ is a dogma which has grown in the Christian consciousness, but which was not expressly formulated in the Gospels. It existed solely in the germ, in the notion of the Messiah, Son of God."<sup>2</sup>

Loisy makes much of the atmosphere of faith in the early community. This loving faith of bereaved disciples made of him all that is beyond the historical, pious Jew, who essayed the rôle of the Messiah. The risen Jesus was an object of faith (*un objet de foi*), not a historical phenomenon.<sup>3</sup>

The narratives of the infancy of Jesus, including that of the Virgin birth, cannot be regarded as historical memories, but only as memories, transfigured by loving disciples.<sup>4</sup> In fact everything in the New Testament that is attributed to the risen Jesus, is frankly stated to spring from this idealizing faith in the hearts of the disciples. This must be, he maintains, the point of view of the historian. But going beyond this, he af-

<sup>1</sup> *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 227.

<sup>4</sup> *L'Evangile et L'Eglise*, 29-31.

firms the *legitimacy* of this idealization of Jesus. The historian can only note the faith of the early community and its developments through the ages. He need be neither an apologist or an adversary. The whole of the doctrine, polity and cult of the Church, is the expression of the developing interpretation of the historical Jewish Messiah. The object of this faith is at no stage of its development, for the historian, a factual reality (*une réalité de fait*). It is a religious interpretation of historical facts.<sup>1</sup>

The resurrection of Jesus, not being a fact for the historian, must be accepted as an act of faith on the part of the primitive community of disciples. The same living faith of the community goes on to found the Church, propound doctrines, and establish forms of worship in the name of the glorified Christ. The Church speaks the mind of Christ. The Church is his body—the extension of the incarnation in secular conditions—it speaks from faith and to faith.

After this faith had raised and glorified Jesus, the idealizing process goes on in a necessary and legitimate course of development. The Church continued the idealizing process as to the person and work of Christ till the council of Nicea, where he became, "Very God of Very God; begotten, not made; being of one substance (*ὁμοούσιον*) with the Father," which is a transcendental explanation of an historical fact."<sup>2</sup> But this was the natural, necessary and valid development of the Gospel of Jesus. Thus Loisy accepts *en bloc* the whole authoritative teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. He looks upon it as the rational explication and development of the primitive Gospel, adapted to the changing times and needs of men. Apparently there is no sign of scepticism, of an *arrière pensée*, in any of his writings that would lead one to suppose him to be other than a loyal, and devoted and submissive member of the Roman Catholic Church.

<sup>1</sup> *L'Évangile et L'Église*, 31-32.

<sup>2</sup> *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, 148.



The others, while taking the same view of the historical facts in all their development, make it the ground for protesting against historical Christianity, Protestant as well as Roman Catholic. They will have only the personal religion of the Jewish reformer, and, for the individual, only the subjective experience of "God and the soul, and the soul and its God, as the sole contents of the Gospel."

Loisy is just as frank, when he comes to treat of the historical side of the foundation and growth of the Church. Religion cannot live and be propagated on earth, without a religious organization. The Church has been the body of the glorified Saviour. He treats the Church as the development, by the Christian community, of the Messianic consciousness of Jesus. He expressly denies that the historical Jesus founded and organized a Church, setting aside all the proof-texts usually cited from the New Testament. "The institution of the Church by the *resurrected* Christ is not a tangible fact for the historian." Historically it started with "the rupture of the new religion with Judaism,"<sup>1</sup> of which the historical Jesus had always remained a conforming member. "The Church was not only the inevitable, but the *legitimate* outcome of the Gospel."<sup>2</sup> "The Church to-day resembles the primitive community, but only as an adult man resembles a new born babe."<sup>3</sup> All development implies change. It is not in the cradle one seeks for the actual man, and yet there is an identity persisting through all the growth of the babe into manhood. He protests against the view of the others as an abstraction, when they want the pure essence—the kernel without the husk, the soul without a body.

"The intentions of the Church are, for the believers, the intentions of the Immortal Christ. \* \* One sees, without difficulty, that the Church has not been founded nor the Sacraments instituted, strictly speaking, except by the glorified Saviour.

<sup>1</sup> *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, 171, 172.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxvii.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Evangile et L'Eglise*, p. 160.

It follows that the institution of the Church and Sacraments by Christ, like the glorification of Jesus itself, is an object of faith, not of historical demonstration."<sup>1</sup>

But as he holds that "Christ is God for faith," though the deification of Jesus has its historical process of three centuries, so he holds to the infallible authority of the Church and of the Pope, reached through centuries of Christian life and thought. "What has been acquired has been acquired," though the end is not yet. He looks forward to future modifications of the Church's doctrine and cult, to meet the needs of new times and new thought.<sup>2</sup>

"Thus, for the historian, who limits himself to the consideration of observable facts, it is the *faith in Christ* that has founded the Church; from the point of view of this faith, it is Christ himself, living for the faith, and accomplishing for it that which the historian sees realized."<sup>3</sup>

His historical treatment of the growth of dogmas differs little from that of Harnack. Scarcely any of the accepted dogmas are to be found in the New Testament. They have been made by the mind of the Church, formulating its Christian consciousness.

As an historian he sees the influence of Greek philosophy, Roman law and other changing environments, as factors of this development of the Church and her dogmas and cult.

That which interests Protestants most is his last chapter on "*The Catholic Cult*" and the chapter in his second book on "*The Institution of the (seven) Sacraments.*"

He rightly says that "History knows of no instance of a religion without a cult, and consequently Christian ritual should cause no surprise. But one easily conceives that if the essence of Christianity is such as M. Harnack has defined, such a pure Christianity excludes all external forms of worship. That

<sup>1</sup> *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, pp. 155. *L'Evangile et L'Eglise*, p. 203.

<sup>3</sup> *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, p. 172.

would be a peculiar religion, designed for a legion of angels, of which every individual constitutes a separate species, and not for men destined to live together on earth.”<sup>1</sup>

Every religion is sacramental. Christianity without cult, is at best a mystic philosophy, like Neo-Platonism. The historic Jesus did not institute these forms of worship. He used the Jewish cult. But as soon as Christianity grew to be a separate religion, it had need of a new cult adapted to its religious ideas and wants. A cult was necessary to its life and propagation. To be propagated in other nations, it was necessary for it to adopt more or less of their forms of worship. Thus the cult grew as it conformed to the special conditions of nascent Christianity. “Suppose that one can prove the pagan origin of a number of Christian rites, these rites ceased to be pagan when they were accepted and interpreted by the Church. Suppose that the great development of the worship of the saints, of relics, of the Virgin, are due in some ways to a pagan influence, it is not to be condemned solely on account of this origin.”<sup>2</sup> To be a universal religion, Christianity must needs put off its Jewish form and adapt itself to the language, ideas and forms of other peoples. Converted Gentiles not only obtained a dispensation from the Jewish rite of circumcision, but they also were able to preserve many of their own rites on condition of their having a Christian interpretation of them. Otherwise Christianity could never have converted the nations.<sup>3</sup> Sacraments are naturally and morally necessary means of grace in any religion. “They are the expression of the inner religion, and the means of communication with God. The meaning of sacramental symbols is determined by the historical circumstances of their institution and their usage. Their efficacy comes from their being means of grace as words are means of expression of thought.”<sup>4</sup> They

<sup>1</sup> *L'Evangile et L'Eglise*, p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 231.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 233-5.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 260.

symbolize and realize, for the Christian, the perpetual action of Christ in the Church."<sup>1</sup> Loisy also advises that the Catholic Church modify her cult somewhat, to meet the needs of the modern world, without repudiating the transmitted heritage of the Christian past.

Again, we note his contention that the cult was gradually instituted by the Church. The historical Jesus instituted no sacraments. "The institution of Baptism was by the glorified Saviour, that is to say, the Gospel itself testifies that the rite was born in the apostolic community."<sup>2</sup> So as to the Mass. The Last Supper, as recorded in the Gospel, was a Jewish Messianic feast, but it became the germ from which the glorified Jesus, through his disciples and their converts, finally instituted the Mass. Thus "only the pious imagination of a naïve faith could picture St. Peter saying Mass pontifically the day after the resurrection."<sup>3</sup>

Thus far we have presented chiefly the negative side of Loisy's teaching, finding his historical criticism of a developed Church differing but little from that of Sabatier and Harnack. The positive side of his teaching is, that there is no soul on earth without a body, and no soul and body that are not in a process of development. Thus he would answer Harnack's question, "What is Christianity," by saying, that it is the historical Church,—an organism of soul and body, developing through the ages. So, too, he would answer Sabatier by saying, that there never has been a "Religion of the Spirit" apart from a "Religion of Authority."

"The essence of Christianity" or "the pure Gospel" has never existed as an abstraction, apart from the color of time and place and environment in which it has taken form. It can never, historically, be separated from the Christian community. It was born and has lived in a communal organization. As the

<sup>1</sup> P. 278.

<sup>2</sup> *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, p. 229.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, pp. 237-45.

human body is modified by what it takes up from its food and environment, so has the Church been modified by its environment. The influence of environment in producing variations in the form, color and habits of animals is now one of the recognized principles of biology. Environment is the source of change, and change of development, and development of the realization of what was merely potential or the supposed essence of a thing. The *actuality* is always more than the essence. Christianity is what the Gospel has become on earth and under temporal conditions. It has always been changing.

Now it is to history that Loisy looks for the causes of these changes, these variations, these developments. He seeks to understand a dogma, institution or cult, by learning the historical circumstances through which it has become what it is. He seeks to preserve the body which preserves the soul; while Sabatier and Harnack seek to preserve the soul without the body of Christianity, for with them the creeds, polity and cult of the Church have all been peeled off and nothing is left of Christianity, but a filial feeling in the soul of the believer towards its heavenly Father; unmediated by rites and creeds and deeds of the Church.

This at least appears on the surface, to be the interpretation given to the Gospel and the Church by M. Loisy. But a critical reading of his two volumes awakens a doubt as to this larger and more concrete view. One finds in fact two disconnected developments with no organic relation between them. There is the same historical development traced in almost the identical language of Harnack and Sabatier. And there is also the development of the faith, the inward essence of the religion going on to expand its interpretation of itself—a super-historical process. Acts of faith and objects of faith, idealizations of facts, transcendental facts, are here the materials and the potencies that give us an extra-historical development.

The causal or the reciprocal relation between the two is not made apparent. The soul is not clearly shown as active in



adapting the environments to its own life, nor are the environments looked at as causal of the soul—the faith of the Church. At most it is a case of casual parallelism, based upon the same agnosticism—the same incompetency of knowledge in the spiritual realm, that is the basis of both Sabatier's and Harnack's views. It is an appeal from knowledge to faith. The only advance in rationality made by Loisy, is making the appeal to communal faith rather than to that of the individual. This is truly an advance. With Harnack it is ever a question of the faith of the individual soul and its God, unmediated by that of the communal soul. He sets aside all mediations as impertinent obtrusions between the soul and its God, and retires to the oracle within for private audience with Him, thus dismissing all forms of communal authority for the individual. God must be to each individual that which his own inner oracle gives. The logical result is that "*de deis non disputandum est.*"

It is a case of individual anthropomorphization of subjective feeling or faith, rather than a communal one. Just so far as the social, the corporate view of man is truer than the abstract individual view,<sup>1</sup> so far is Loisy's view truer than Harnack's.

Let Harnack blot out, and un-relate himself from all the interpretations of the primitive Christian community; from all the creeds, deeds and cult of the Church; from the whole of the Christian sentiment and culture in which he has been bathed from his earliest years, and he would probably find the oracle within bespeaking a primitive form of nature-worship, and himself worshiping a stock or stone or sun instead of a heavenly Father. Without the mediation, the authority of a communal Christian life of eighteen centuries, he would not even have the lofty human ideal of a Christ.

So far then as Loisy stands for a Christianity that is the age-long self-interpretation and self-objectifying of a communal consciousness or faith, so far does he commend his view as giving a rational authority for individual faith and action.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chap. I.

But a deeper doubt rises, which applies to both of these two views. That doubt arises from the agnostic standpoint of all the three writers. We cannot *know* God.

Then, though religion be a psychological necessity and a perennial experience of the individual and of the race, there can be no rational validation of it. To take the matter at its centre, we have only psychological experiences, individual or communal. At best we can objectify them. We can turn subjective anthropology into objective theology. This was the standpoint of Ludwig Feuerbach in his book of the same title as Harnack's, *das Wesen Christentums*, translated by Marian Evans (George Eliot) under the title *Essence of Christianity*. Here all objectivity of God and the Christ of the Church, is derived from the self-deification of man and humanity. It is no longer God and the soul, but only the soul and its experiences. There is no longer question that the risen and glorified Saviour is an act of finite spirit. The Catholics, he says, are more logical than the Protestants since they objectify and deify not only the love of the human father and son, but also a mother's love. God is in reality only a self-given affirmative answer to our own wishes.

Feuerbach held that man alone is divine. How then does he come to believe in and worship God? That is an illusion formed from the wishes of the heart and poetic imagination. The Gods are wish-beings (*Wunschwesen*)—the wishes and ideals of the human heart objectified by the imagination. Man objectifies not his empirical self, but his self as he wishes it to be. A miracle is an imaginary realization of a supernatural wish. Christ is the omnipotence of subjectivity, the objectification of the wishes of the heart. Here we find a most thorough-going pragmatism applied to the explanation of objective religion.

Later, Feuerbach came to take a pessimistic view of this objective deification of man's nature. For in it, man gives away to God what is really his own highest nature. He thus divests himself of that nature, putting it into an im-

aginary God or Christ. The practical direction is, that man should resume what he has wrongly objectified out of himself, and then be his own God and his own Saviour. Thus, he says, the truth in the sacraments is that eating and drinking and the bath are really human good things. Feuerbach called himself an atheist, and explicitly affirmed that his views were in direct opposition to those of Hegel, so that it is wrong to place him among even the left-wing Hegelians.

We need not stop to show how easily and logically Harnack's view runs into that of Feuerbach. Here we raise the question whether Loisy's view is not identical with it. The resurrection and ascension—the whole process of the excarnation and glorification of Jesus of Nazareth—was a subjective one in the hearts of the bereaved band of disciples, and not historical fact. In the atmosphere of corporate faith and love there was this communal act of faith, that gave them a risen and glorified Jesus. He ever remains an object of faith (*objet de foi*), rather than of knowledge. And so the whole process of the supernatural side of Christianity goes on as a subjective communal experience, which is unconsciously objectified.

Loisy's contention is that the mind of the Church is the mind of Christ; that what the community thinks and does and says are the thoughts and deeds and sayings of the glorified Christ. So his whole explication of the Christ-element can be taken as an objectification of the subjective faith of the community. There is not a phase of Church teaching as set forth by Loisy, that cannot be consistently explained on Feuerbach's view of the objectifying of subjective experiences. An honest God is, on this theory, the noblest work of man, so a glorified and an ever present teaching and saving Jesus is the noblest work, the creation of the Church.

Loisy's apparent sincerity is such that we may doubt if he consciously takes this purely subjective view of Christ. The Christ of the Church as defined in the Nicene Creed is the Eternal Son of the Eternal Father. The immanent presence of

this Eternal Logos in the Church is no form of mere finite subjectivity, individual or corporate—that is the view of historical Christianity. Loisy apparently accepts this view sincerely. And yet his interpretation of its development out of the subjective faith of the community, seems to deprive it of any true objectivity. Any agnostic can accept this interpretation of religion as an idealistic fiction, which makes Christianity to be, at best, a pious fable.

If this is Loisy's view, it is based on the same religious agnosticism that vitiates the work of Harnack and Sabatier. And the same criticism made on their view applies to Loisy's.<sup>1</sup> Knowledge of objective truth and reality is limited to that of science and history, but is denied in the realm of religion. And nescience can never give any philosophy of religion that will validate or give it authority in any of its forms, even the highest.

Taking this view of Loisy's exposition of *The Gospel and the Church*, we can readily understand and appreciate the condemnation passed upon it by the authorities in the Roman Catholic Church.

Loisy's second volume,<sup>2</sup> written after the condemnation, is a reply to his critics that retracts nothing, but rather gives more countenance to the view that he is treating Christianity as a fine, pious fable. In an appendix, he gives the text of the official condemnation of his book, placing it in the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*. We give a translation of the text of a part of this document.<sup>3</sup>

Thus one who turns to Loisy, from Sabatier and Harnack, to find a more rational and objective interpretation of Christianity, will have a feeling of disappointment arising from this doubt.

Religion cannot thrive on a known fable, however pious it

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chap. II.

<sup>2</sup> *Autour d'un Petit Livre*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Appendix, note V.

may be. If one could only detect the sceptic's smile in the honest looks of the author, he would spend no time in reading his books.

Again, if this is Loisy's view, he is also open to criticism as to the development of the subjective communal faith. As I have said, the development of the faith and the historical development do not seem to be clearly put in vital relation. It is a case of casual parallelism rather than of organic interaction. Faith at best plays the part of a hermit crab, not growing its own shell, but taking possession of the cast-off shell of a mollusk, only quitting it for another when he has outgrown it. It grew large enough to take the Roman Empire for its body during the Middle Ages. It may grow large enough to house itself in the cast-off shell of modern democracy. But it never makes its own shell. Thus one could not speak of its historical transformations, as the development of, the Gospel.

Again, as Loisy resolutely identifies the Gospel with the external organization—the hermit crab, with its stolen house—he could be faulted with just the opposite of Harnack's error. He validates the abstraction of the opposite side, that of the body, as Harnack does that of the spirit. He gives us the brute actual, as Harnack gives us the invisible essence; identifying the soul with the body, the Gospel with the Church.

But now, giving the author the benefit of the doubt, let us look at his work as that of a sincere apologist for Christianity. Let us take him at his positive word in one passage, as believing in a risen and ever living Christ.

It occurs in the chapter<sup>1</sup> in which he discusses the question as to the Church having been instituted by Christ. The Messianic kingdom of the living Jesus was an historical fact. The Church in a true sense continues it. But "as a divine institution it is an object of faith (*un objet de foi*) not a fact that is *historically demonstrable*," for it is "founded upon the divinity of Christ, which is not an historical fact, but one given

<sup>1</sup> *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, p. 169.



by faith, of which the Church is witness." Dismissing the words "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church," he holds rightly, that all the texts which concern the mission of the Apostles and the real institution of the Church are the words of the risen and glorified Christ.<sup>1</sup> "John has united into one tableau the instructions of the Saviour in Matthew and Luke, and the Pentecostal scene of the Acts. That appearance of Christ to his apostles is what founds the faith of the Church and the Church itself." But all comes from the risen Saviour. The glorified Jesus breathes upon the apostles to give spiritual life, as God had breathed into the first man to give him natural life. Thenceforward the apostles and their successors are the mouthpieces of the glorified Saviour. What they say and do is, for faith, what the glorified Jesus says and does. But Loisy returns to his contention that the resurrection and glorification of Jesus are not, properly speaking, historical facts, facts for knowledge, but only for the subjective faith of the community. Finally he says: "Thus, then, for the historian, who limits himself to observable facts, it is the faith in Christ that founded the Church; from the point of view of faith it is *Christ himself, living for the faith* and accomplishing through it (faith) that which the historian sees realized."<sup>2</sup> Here he professedly puts himself at the point of view of faith. He believes with the disciples and the Church of the ages, that *Jesus did rise from the dead* and ever liveth. He has the same faith in the reality of the glorified Saviour that Sabatier and Harnack have in God the Father. In the preface<sup>3</sup> to this second volume, he expressly says that he has not denied that Jesus was raised from the dead, but only that the fact is, rigorously speaking, demonstrable as an historical fact. Taking him at his word here that he believes in a risen, glori-

<sup>1</sup> Matthew, XXVIII, 18-20; Luke, XXIV, 46-49; Acts, I, 6-8; John, XX, 21-23; Mark, XVI, 15-16.

<sup>2</sup> *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, p. 172.

<sup>3</sup> P. viii.

fied, ever-living, ever-working, a transcendent and yet an immanent *Logos* in the Church—something more than a mere objectified faith of the community—we can accept his whole exposition as more objective and rational than that of Harnack's subjective *Essence of Christianity*. "In me lives one greater than me," said Sabatier. That is the only recognition of objectivity that we find in the view of Sabatier and Harnack. And it is always open to the doubter to ask what certifies to this "one greater than me," being aught else than me at the highest.

Take also the following quotation from Loisy: "From the circumstance that Jesus entered into history, it by no means follows that He does not still dominate it; from the fact that He lived our life and spoke as a man, it does not follow that He was not God." As to the Church's theory of The Person and Work of Christ, "the Catholic critic admits the truth of this interpretation, as he does that of every other dogma, accepting its formula as the authorized faith which, born of the word of Christ and of the Gospel fact, gradually grew more and more precise in the consciousness of Christendom." "The historical Christ, in the humility of his service is sublime enough to justify the Christology of the Church. Its definitions are the best for faith that could have been formulated. . . . The sentiment which Jesus had of his union with God is above all definition. It is enough to say that the way in which he embodied it, is, so far as one can grasp, equivalent in substance to the ecclesiastical definition." "The Gospel idea of the Messiah contains the principle of the entire Christological development. It implies the eternal predestination of the one who should appear in this world as the Son of God, and his final exaltation." "Vulgar rationalism with its purely transcendent God and its purely human Christ is a paltry heresy. . . . The acquired attainments are sure. Christ is God for faith."<sup>1</sup> "The integral formula of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, 133-155.

Christianity is Christ in the Church and God in Christ."<sup>1</sup> "The vocation of Christ is not that of a prophet. It is unique in its kind."<sup>2</sup>

Putting all three writers on the plane of earnest and sincere faith, and on the basis of a religious agnosticism, we find Loisy to be more objective and more Christian than Harnack and Sabatier. He is more *objective* because he gives us the corporate, communal faith rather than that of the private individual. In the Church lives one greater than the Church, rather than "in me lives a greater than me."

So, too, he is more *Christian* than they are, because with them "the greater than me" is God, symbolized as Father and not an ever-living and ever-present Christ. For them the mediation of Christ is confined to the influence of the Jesus of memory—the memory of an historical person who lived and died some nineteen centuries ago. As they hold that the resurrection of Jesus belongs not to the history of Jesus, but to that of the apostles, so they hold that even if he is immortal, it is in no other way than other great souls are immortal, and that his present influence upon men differs not in kind from the influence of departed friends and great men. It should be thoroughly understood that, with them, all reference to a present Jesus, in public or private worship is merely symbolical; that at most we can have memorial exercises which will help to call up the image of the work and worth of the departed, so that we may have a felt presence. Jesus "was crucified dead and buried, he descended into hell"—or in the alternate language of the rubric before the Apostles' Creed—"he went into the place of departed spirits." That is the close of *their* Apostles' Creed. Where and in what manner of existence other departed spirits are, is the most we can say of the dead and buried historical Jesus of Nazareth.

Loisy continues the corporate *faith* of the Church to the end

<sup>1</sup> *L'Evangile et L'Eglise*, xxxiv.

<sup>2</sup> *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, 134

of the creed. For the faith of the early community, for the faith of the historical Church, Jesus rose from the dead. That, for the Church, is a fact in the life of Jesus. However Loisy may decline to consider it a demonstrable historical fact, he accepts it as a *bona fide* experience of the disciples, and a continued experience of the Church—realizing Jesus and the power of his resurrection.

For Loisy, the mediation of Jesus is a perpetual one. In the Church lives, as its animating, guiding, helping spirit a greater than itself—the glorified Saviour, the Eternal *Logos*. The Church is his body—oftentimes his body of humiliation. He humbles Himself to the limitations of human nature, in time and space and historical conditions. His work in the extension of the incarnation in the Church militant is in the process of perfection into the Church triumphant—just as the historical Jesus “*increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.*”<sup>1</sup>

No phase of historical Christianity, or of its fruitful sects, have been existent and fruitful apart from the energizing of the immanent *Logos*. Much less has the whole of historical Christianity—its developed form of creed and deed and cult—been allogical. God has been in Christian history.

The Church has never been perfect, as perfection cannot be a mark of any process. So there can be no claim made for the absolute infallibility of any form or phase of historical Christianity. And Loisy does not hold a brief for any such an infallible authority. He looks for further transformations of the Church in doctrine and cult; taking up the new learning and adapting itself to the needs of new times.

Speaking of the present religious crisis, resulting from the new learning or modern culture, he says:

“The best means to remedy the trouble does not seem to be the suppression of all ecclesiastical organization, all orthodoxy and traditional ritual. That would be a casting of Christianity

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke, II, 52.

out of life and out of humanity. The rather one should start from what is, in view of what ought to be, repudiating nothing of the heritage transmitted to our age by the Christian centuries; but appreciating the necessity and usefulness of the immense development which has been accomplished in the Church. It is to gather the fruits of this work and continue it, since the adaptation of the Gospel to the changing conditions of humanity is as pressing a need to-day as it has always been and ever will be."<sup>1</sup>

Again: "It is worthy of notice, that old as the Church is . . . she regards herself as a provisional institution, a transitional organization."<sup>2</sup> Again, as to the authority of the Church he says: "It is not true that ecclesiastical authority has ever been a sort of external constraint to repress all personal activity of conscience. The Church is an educator rather than a dominating mistress."<sup>3</sup> He contends that Romanism aims as much as Protestantism, at the formation of religious personalities, souls masters of themselves with pure and free consciences, though he grants the danger of the Roman tendency towards the effacement of the individual. "The Gospel of Jesus," he says, "was neither wholly individualistic in the Protestant sense, nor wholly ecclesiastical in the Catholic sense." "The Church ever employs activity and intelligence in modifying her forms. She has, as individualistic theologians do not, a sense of the collective and continuous character of Christianity." Again, as to dogma, it is impossible for intelligent Christians to believe anything, without going on to state it in intellectual forms.

Then there must be a teacher. The distinction between teachers and pupils is inevitable. The Church is a teacher and how shall she teach, if she have nothing definite to teach? "A permanent society, a Church alone can maintain the equilibrium between the heritage and the new acquisitions of truth.

<sup>1</sup> *L'Evangile et L'Eglise*, p. 278.

<sup>2</sup> P. 157.

<sup>3</sup> P. 166.



Hence the incessant toil of the human reason to adapt ancient truth to the new stages of thought and knowledge. It is inconceivable that each individual should recommence afresh the past, and reconstruct, for his own use, the whole religion.<sup>1</sup> Here, as elsewhere, each is aided by all and all by each." "The Church does not demand belief in its formulas as the adequate expression of absolute truth, but presents them as the least imperfect expression that is morally possible. She demands that they be respected for their value, that we seek the truth contained in them and use them to transmit the truth."<sup>2</sup>

In every phase of Christianity, the Church is as necessary to the Gospel as the Gospel is to the Church. Looking at its history, his contention that the Church has preserved the Gospel seems true. Look at the dark ages and the middle ages. Yes, and we may hereafter look back to the present age for illustration. The Church has no other *raison d'être* than the preservation and propagation of the Gospel in the world. "The hierarchy exists for the sake of the faithful. The Church does not exist for the service of the Pope, but the Pope exists for the service of the Church." "Christ did not choose a cross for himself and reserve a throne for his vicar."<sup>3</sup> The authority of the Church is the needed preservative of this institution of service, as it is of any human institution. And it is true, as he says, that "Protestantism itself exists as a religion, by means of that amount of ecclesiastical organization, official doctrine and confessional worship that it has retained."<sup>4</sup> It is as "a religion of authority," as Sabatier stigmatizes Protestantism up to date, that it has won its mighty moral and spiritual results in the modern world. And surely any student of history may rightly predict, that when it ceases to be such, and becomes "the religion of the spirit;" the religion of merely subjective

<sup>1</sup> *L'Évangile et L'Eglise*, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> P. 218.

<sup>3</sup> *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, p. 178.

<sup>4</sup> *L'Évangile et L'Eglise*, p. 277.

individualism, its days of power and usefulness will be gone. In his second volume, Loisy discusses very frankly the function of the Pope. Quoting our Saviour's words to his disciples at strife as to who of them should be accounted greatest,<sup>1</sup> he goes on to insist that the *raison d'être* of the hierarchy is that of service to the people.<sup>2</sup> When people come to think that public servants act as if the people were made to be their servants and ministers, then the people will see no reason of having public servants who prey upon them as public lords. The directing *élite* of any society must be in the service of the masses. That is their function. Thence is their authority. Ecclesiastical authority is necessary to the preservation and the propagation of the Gospel itself. When it ceases to do this, it ceases to have a reason for existence. The extreme form of ecclesiastical authority was historically necessary in past ages—necessary in the last few centuries also against the theological anarchy and crumbling individualism of Protestant Christianity. But it has its dangers—the oppression of individuals, the being an obstacle to the scientific movement, and to all the forms of free activity, which is the chief agent of human progress. The present revindication of the individual, is a reaction against the perversion of authority. It is a movement to preserve the dignity and the responsibility of the individual, the family, and the state against being made the tools of a hierarchy which rules for its own profit, rather than serving the welfare of its clients. The critical question in the Roman Catholic Church now is, whether the hierarchy can adapt itself to the service of modern needs. Loisy is hopeful. He expresses his contempt for the cry of the Ultramontanists, “shun the error of *l'américanisme*.”

The rightful authority of the Church has been vindicated by nineteen centuries of Christian history. The abuses of its function are now to be corrected—means are to be found for its

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke, XXII, 24-27.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 179.

beneficent exercise to-day, as in past ages. The pupils whom the Church is to educate, are not in the same class as those in less enlightened ages. The course of instruction and the authority of the pedagogue must change to suit the needs of the present. Authority can never pass from the Church as an educator, but it can adapt itself, as it always has done, to the needs of the times. Referring to the indefatigable labors of the present Pope, he says, "in writing that the Pope exists for the service of the Church I am thinking of Leo XIII., and I would say that his service has been glorious and good."<sup>1</sup> This he writes as a loyal Catholic, after the condemnation of his previous book.

Here the way is open for a philosophy of Christianity that is not pessimistic. Here the way is open to real objectivity, though it be but in and through a process, and the end is not yet. Here we have no crab-cry, back to the primitive, the undeveloped, but the forward-cry to the more perfect, till we all together, corporately, come unto the stature of the fullness of Christ glorified. Here we have objectivity and authority—not of the brute actual, but of the *Logos* in the brute actual, and that of not a merely immanent *Logos*. For any finite actuality—bulk it large as humanity itself—any merely immanent *Logos*, in any form of mere actuality cannot be a sufficient First Principle, leading forward beyond any mere *status quo*, and onward to the final consummation of the whole process of the Church militant into the Church triumphant. Any *status quo* of a developing process of a temporal actuality, must have the authority of a developed stage only, and never that of an absolutely infallible authority. Loisy makes no such claim for any stage of any of the Creed, polity or cult of even the Roman Catholic Church. But he makes the claim for authority that every human organization makes, as sustaining and educating and developing itself as a minister of good. The actual at any time—the body which the soul assumes—is the rational done into humanity up to date, by the eternal *Logos*, which is able to

<sup>1</sup> *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, 178-186.

order "the unruly wills and affections of sinful men" into more conformity to itself. It forbids both the re-affirmation and the denial of the ideals, deeds and faith of its past, through which it has attained its present. Only the institution that honors its parent can dwell long in the land—the promise annexed to the Fifth Commandment. It is this authoritative element that preserves any institution. At the same time it forbids any uncritical acceptance of previous forms of life, as well as any glorification of any mere *status quo* of the institution. Successive forms are posited and, in time, transcended, but the identity persists in the differences.

The eternal *Logos*—the ever really present Christ in the Church—that is "the essence of Christianity." That is the interpretation of Christianity that historical Protestantism as well as Romanism has ever maintained. The *Logos* is not a merely human, or a merely subjective idea, but an absolute *Logos*, law, order, form, reason, self-realizing itself in temporal forms. This realization has been through institutional forms as educative of individuals. It has ever been corporate. And the corporate form has ever been authoritative and, only as such, educative of the individual. The Church, as the institutional form of the religious side of the *Logos*, is thus the objective rational authority of reason for all its members, in which they find their freedom. To be a good Churchman is thus essential to being a good Christian. From the cradle to the grave, the Church appeals to its members with the voice of paternal authority. It asks for no other than filial response, and the recognition of its past, present and promised beneficence in educating them into the freedom of the Sons of God, "whose service is perfect freedom." This is the form of authority that the Church assumes—the fact of its being the adequate ethical, as it has ever been the historical, medium of the Christian life.

Harnack and Sabatier pose as the foremost representatives

of Protestantism. Speaking historically and objectively, they are nothing of the sort.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Harnack is apprehensive for the future of Protestantism. But this is not because of the decline of theology or because of the growth of the so-called liberal movement of which he is a representative. The following are the danger signals that alarm him.<sup>2</sup> They are signals "of the progressive Catholicizing (Romanizing) of the Protestant Churches" in Germany.

In this little volume he says of the Protestant churches of Germany that "(1) They are coming to look upon the visible Church as identical with the true Church invisible, having authority to be respected. They have come to speak too much of the Church, and of the what the Church says and demands. The Catholicizing (*Romanizing*) of the conception of the Church is the most powerful of the radical transformations which Protestantism is undergoing in the nineteenth century.

(2) They are promoting the authority of the creeds, as distinguished from systems of doctrinal theology.

(3) They are attempting "to produce complete uniformity in the services of the Church. . . . They are already in the midst of a liturgical Catholicizing movement."

(4) They are exalting the Sacraments and magnifying the clergy.

(5) There was a time when Protestantism was a Church of preaching, and a school of catechizing and nothing more. But now alas! we have a very complex lot of activities carried on by the Church. We have deacons and deaconesses, city missionaries, Sunday school teachers of both sexes, and other most varied and graduated organs of the Church's life and activity. Religious meetings have taken manifold forms. Religion is forcing its way into all the professional walks of mankind, into all corporations, and there setting up Christian fellowship and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chap. I of this volume.

<sup>2</sup> *Thoughts on Protestantism*. Adolf Harnack. 1899



a footing of Christian morality. The Churches are paying attention to that multitude of topics which we call the "Social Question." "In all these factors taken together, we have what may be described as the Catholicizing of Protestantism."

Professor Harnack first criticises the older Protestantism for not having to do entirely with the simple Gospel. He then criticizes the present Protestant Churches for having departed so far from early Protestantism. Finally as he says, "the critical form of Protestantism is going. . . . is to have a clear insight into conditions in which the Protestant life is on the point of disappearing." These conditions are the ones which he has given as signs of the Catholicizing of the Protestant Churches. This movement, he adds, is fascinating and tempting. "*But it is temptation*; for it is the last of Protestantism, of the Gospel and of the truth."

But he still sees some ground for hope. It lies in the lines of a non-authoritative, individualistic sort of association of those who, like himself, form the *ecclesiola in ecclesia*. He lays "a wreath of profound gratitude on the tomb of Albrecht Ritschl" and looks to the new leaders to save the Protestant Churches from going over to a sham Catholicism.

It is needless to say that the Protestant Churches of Germany have as utterly disowned his interpretation of Protestantism, as the Roman Catholic Church has repudiated Loisy's interpretation of Romanism. The lecture that forms the contents of his little book, *Thoughts on Protestantism*, was characterized in a German paper as "a radical repudiation of Christianity, and of the Christian belief founded on the historical fact of the revelation of God in Christ."

Loisy writes as a Roman Catholic. That is an accident of birth and education. Granting that he is as sincere as Sabatier and Harnack, and making allowance for this accident of ecclesiastical home, we must grant that he takes a much more objective and historical and, therefore, more rational view of

Christianity than Sabatier, Martineau, Harnack, and the whole school of Ritschlians.

If we object, as object we do, to his Romanistic prejudices, we can find the same view under the prejudices of the Anglican Church, in the notable volume of eleven High Anglicans published fifteen years ago, entitled *Lux Mundi*.<sup>1</sup> This volume will well bear re-reading in connection with that of Loisy.

We may accept the interpretation which both the Roman and the Anglo-Catholic give of institutional Christianity—accept their philosophical interpretation of the continuous re-incarnation of the transcendent *Logos* in corporate, institutional religious form. It is a philosophy which belongs to no one, because it belongs to every form of the Church, and also to every form of man's institutional life. We may object, as object we do, to the restricted view of the Anglo-Catholic writers. They take too insular, or better, too peninsular, a view to be quite Catholic. They do not construct a map of a sufficiently large and variegated form, in defining the bounds of the Church. They fail to recognize that outside of the Episcopal Churches, there are also other vital and fruitful branches of the vine. "*Hinter dem Berge sind auch Leute.*" Historical Protestantism is looked at too much as an apostasy. And yet a very large part of the rich, fruitful Christian life of modern Europe and America, is outside of what both the Romanist and these Anglo-Catholic writers call the Church. A narrow, arrogant and formal Anglo-Catholicism cannot give an adequate interpretation of historical Christianity. But we may neglect the limitations of all these writers and yet welcome their interpretation of parts of Christianity, and apply it to the whole. Every form of Christianity that is valid for the extension of the incarnation in humanity, is an extension of the Church. Every branch that is a fruitful branch, is a branch of the true vine. Every fold (αὐλή) of Christians belong to the one flock (ποιμήν) of the one

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Sterrett's *Reason and Authority in Religion*, Part II.

Shepherd.<sup>1</sup> Each and all they are forms of "the religion of the spirit" *because* they are "religions of authority." "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."<sup>2</sup> The presence is communal, the authority is corporate, the freedom is that of members.

And yet the vision splendid that haunts both the Romanist and the Anglican, is more than a dream; more than merely an echo of the Saviour's prayer—"that they all may be one."<sup>3</sup> The integrations of the differences has always been more real than apparent. The bond of identity has been the ever-present Lord. And yet the differences are greater than can belong to a normal and healthy body. A re-united Christendom is a consummation devoutly to be wished, and labored, for. The integration of Romanism and Protestantism is the goal, necessary though distant. They are stages in the religious development and education of the world into Christianity, and not world-historical oppositions that must or ought to persist. Both of them are forms of a "religion of authority." In neither of them is the individual to "work out his own salvation." The Reformation-cry "Salvation is by faith alone," made that faith not to be work of man, but an act of divine grace—the work of God in Christ, working in men "both to will and to do of His good pleasure."<sup>4</sup> Luther, in referring to this text, exhorted men to *work out, to root out and cast out* all merely human salvation, that the liberating work of God might be of effect.

This note of authority belongs to the whole of historical Protestantism, and it is not too much to say that when this note goes, Protestantism will cease to be religiously educative.

The whole question of the relations of Romanism and Protestantism deserves a larger treatment than can be given here. But a brief treatment may be in place.

<sup>1</sup> St. John, X, 17.

<sup>2</sup> St. John, XVII, 21.

<sup>3</sup> St. Matthew, XVII, 20.

<sup>4</sup> Philippians, II, 12, 13.

I have referred to the personal tone in Sabatier's volumes. They are the confession of his personal faith. The same is true, in a less marked way, of Harnack's book. I have faulted them both, for their allowing their private prejudices to prevent their taking an objective view of Christianity. Let me make a preliminary personal confession of private prejudices; of subjective likes and convictions. Practically they are the same as those of Sabatier and Harnack, anti-sympathetic with either the Anglo-Catholic or Roman Catholic. I have the same inbred strain of subjectivity in my religious life and sympathies. I have been suckled at the mother-breast of Protestantism. I have a dislike for ecclesiasticism. In temper, I am a non-conformist. Following my likes, I should seek the religious organization with the minimum of ecclesiasticism. The anti-ecclesiastical spirit has been bred into the very fibre of my spiritual life by my Scotch Presbyterian ancestry and training. To this day I can never hear disparaging remarks about the Presbyterians without irrepressible ire being roused within me. I am a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church—so long as it remains the *Protestant* Episcopal Church, and no longer—from intellectual convictions. I have no sympathy with the so-called Catholic party in our Church. I take it to be a psychological impossibility that I should ever become a Roman Catholic or an Anglo-Catholic. Following my private taste I should, rather than go Romeward, go to the Society of Friends, and enjoy the inner light, and the calm and serene strenuousness, the personal independence, the gentle firmness, the quiet inner life of the peace loving Quakers. Let me call myself a Christian mystic—one whose inner life goes on under ecclesiastical forms that sit lightly upon me. Why I became, and why I remain a good Churchman, then, is on objective intellectual grounds. I find that Christian mysticism is not a merely subjective product, but that, historically, it has always been born and nurtured within the folds of the Church—Roman or other. Mysticism

itself has no genius for organization or propagation. It belongs to the Oriental type of subjectivity. It is beautiful and attractive. But it never has given a form of historical Christianity. It is sporadic and individual. It is like the pearl that is no part of the healthy oyster. So I believe that even Christian mysticism is a form of Christianity, that, speaking historically and objectively, can never give or maintain a form of the Church on earth.

Vital, progressive, missionary and educating Christianity always has had, and always must have a body. It must be an organized body, with polity, creed and cult—external, objective, secular if you will, in form—a kingdom of heaven on *earth*—not in heaven. It is not something invisible and merely heavenly. To fault ecclesiastical Christianity, is to fault Christianity for living rather than dying among men; for existing to preserve, maintain and transmit the Gospel.

All the criticism that can be made against this visible institutional form of Christianity, can be put under the commonplace remarks that nothing finite is perfect; that no developing process is as good as the developed process; that the Christianity of men has always been profoundly inferior to that of God; that the Church militant is not identical in perfection with the Church triumphant. Any total distrust of ecclesiastical Christianity is pathological. The stanch Churchman occupies the normal rational standpoint.

Thus, when repressing one's subjective likings and dislikings and taking an objective view of Christianity, one is compelled to be a stanch Churchman; to contend for the organic visible form of Christianity against the merely subjective, mystical, invisible, pectoral form in which Sabatier and Harnack propose to place its essence. Historical Christianity has always been—up to date, as Sabatier allows—a religion of authority. Hegel speaks of the state as "the terrestrial god." The adjective "terrestrial" of course makes it to be less than the absolute God. But the noun "god" places the state—the whole concrete



of a people's political life—as the vice-regent of God in all that concerns their secular welfare. Its institutions, laws, customs are the best formulation of the laws of well-being. In the high, the Greek view of it, the state is *jure divino*. As such it is authoritative.

Thus St. Paul could write even of the Roman state, that it was “ordained of God,” “a minister of God to thee for good.”<sup>1</sup> The freedom and welfare of its members, for which it exists, is to be attained through conformity to ordained powers.

In the same objective way we must recognize the Church as “the terrestrial god,” *jure divino*, a minister of God for the religious welfare of its members. This is the objective view that all historical students must take of Christianity. It is the view that Sabatier and Harnack do not take. “The essence of Christianity” being restricted to the feeling of filial relation with God the Father, nearly everything which has constituted historical Christianity is considered as a debasement of its essence.

Those who hate Christianity and would fain have it perish, could ask for no more speedy form for its destruction than this destruction of its body. Those who are not Christians, but who study it simply as students of history, must say that there can be no hope of its preservation except through its continuance as a visible Church. Even Christian mystics, when they come to analyze the process through which they have attained their inner life, will find that it has been mediated by the work of the Church. But for the Church of the ages having preserved and promulgated the Gospel, they would never have had the nurture that has made them Christian mystics. The Roman Catholic Church has nurtured the most noted Christian mystics.

Taking an objective, rational and historical view one does not see how to avoid the conclusion that the future of Christianity, like its past, depends upon its being a “religion of authority,” a visible, organized institution, with polity, creed and cult. However much one's own private subjective sympathies may be

<sup>1</sup> Romans, XIII, 1-4

with the standpoint of Sabatier and Harnack, he cannot but intellectually recognize this to be pathological, and the objective view to be the normal and wholesome one.

Loisy accepts Sabatier and Harnack as representatives of Protestantism. But they, confessedly, do not represent historical Protestantism up to date. They only presume to be the earlier exponents of the Protestantism of the future. Looking at the matter objectively, one would say, that if Protestantism ceases to be "a religion of authority" and becomes the inner mystical life of the spirit in the individual, then the future of historical Christianity is not with Protestantism.

Loisy says that there is a crisis in the Roman Catholic Church now, and Sabatier and Harnack voice the same in regard to Protestantism. The *Zeitgeist* of modern culture demands of the Church, at least a *modus vivendi* with itself. Modern culture must be taken up and appropriated by the Church, in order to its being in the future, as it has been in the past, a minister of good in the religious life of humanity. Sabatier and Harnack, recognizing the same crisis in Protestantism, propose to meet it by ceasing to consider historical, institutional Christianity—the Church—as authoritative. They both err in making Protestantism to have so little appreciation of the Church. The early reformers were good Churchmen. John Calvin speaks of the Church with all the fervor of a Cyprian. The Puritans held an extreme view of the *jure divino* form of their polity. Hooker was a very much more moderate defender of Episcopacy. The belittling of the Church by these writers, makes them the exponents of a Protestantism that never was.

We demur on historical grounds to Loisy's considering them to be the representatives of Protestantism. And we demur to their way of meeting the crisis.

We recognize as fully as they do the limitations, errors and evils of both historical Romanism and Protestantism. We recognize that the finite is not the infinite, that "the terrestrial

god" is not the absolute God; that nothing finite—nothing that is in a process of becoming—is yet perfect. But we cannot recognize the taking any form of life out of historical processes to be a means of continuing its life in history. Mere essence can never be an actuality. And, though no empirical actuality can ever be the absolute reality, it is the time and space form of the process towards this reality.

But no historical form of actuality is ever the merely brutal external—the mere body without the soul. As a living thing, it is always the unity of essence and its manifestation—always an insouled externality. And the mere manifestation, the mere external, is always senseless without a soul. Both are abstractions. The actuality is the truth of them both, as the living man is the truth of soul and body. There is no radical dualism, except of abstractions. The analysis of all experience gives us the unity of the dual abstractions. Thus the Church is an actuality, an ensouled body, an incarnated soul—the Gospel in historical form. It is the continued incarnation of the timeless, and spaceless *Logos* in temporal, historical processes. When it becomes merely subjective, it passes out of objectivity, out of history.

Again, no form of actuality, no form of time and space existence is ever merely static. It is always in a process—either of ripening or rotting. Even its rotting is a stage of ripening into other form. Development is ever self-development, a rising on stepping stones of a dead self to a higher self.

Hence, though every form of actuality be a form of reality, we must have *degrees* of reality in the dynamic process of development. One form of any actuality is either higher or lower than another form. The new-born babe is a higher degree of reality than the unborn foetus; the child and the man higher forms than the new-born babe.

Now to apply this to the Christianity, we must maintain, (1) that the Church is actual Christianity, and, (2) that its different forms are different degrees of reality—different stages

of the historical realization of that absolute religion, which is always sublimely superior to the Christianity of men. Romanism and Protestantism are to-day the chief forms of institutional Christianity in the modern world. It is open to the student of history, to note the mighty work of these two branches of the Church in the past, to estimate their present worth and influence, and to forecast the future of historical Christianity.

This would have to be an appreciation of the work of the Church under the three rubrics of:

- (1) Polity and Discipline.
- (2) Creed and Doctrine.
- (3) Cult, or Worship.

Putting ourselves at the standpoint of an "impartial spectator," or a student of history and institutions, we may briefly indicate what would require a volume to express.

One sees these three forms to have been essential constitutive factors in historical Christianity. They have made it both a religion of authority and a religion of spiritual nurture—a preserver, a defender and a propagator of the Gospel. He is a dreamer who thinks that such a mighty form of human institution as the Church is moribund, or that there will be any future Christianity without these factors. We should say that, whether we believe in Christianity or not, the very factors that Harnack decries as the Catholicizing elements in the Protestant Churches, are all notes of the self-preservation of the Church and her work.

Harnack, as we have seen, refers to the increasing reference to the Church, her ways and teaching; the increasing authority accorded the Creeds as distinguished from systems of doctrinal theology; the development of the liturgical side; the exaltation of the Sacraments; and the slighting of preaching for the work of social amelioration. If Protestantism has suffered a decline of these factors, her re-appreciation of them are signs of a better organized life and better aids to her work.

I. *Polity and Discipline*.—An impartial, or even an adverse,

spectator recognizes the power of organization and discipline in the maintenance of any form of institution. A long-lived and broad-spread and efficient institution validates its polity. Here, surely one must acknowledge the vitality and efficiency of Roman Catholicism. History shows no equal to it. It shows no sign of being doomed to being merely "a parenthesis in the record of the larger life of Christendom."

The Protestant Church of England, and the Protestant Episcopal Church of America have the same polity and validity. That is one factor of the Universal Church that, fortunately, the Church of England was not compelled to drop at the Reformation.

What student of history would advise any one of these three branches of the Church to surrender the historic Episcopate as a means of self-preservation, in the present crisis? The view of the judicious Hooker commends itself. The historic Episcopate is, in the long run, necessary to the *well-being* of the Church, though it be not necessary to the *being* of it. It is the form of the organic unity of the Church throughout the ages. Evidently other forms have been *jure divino* for the propagation of the Gospel. One must needs be stone-blind, intoxicated with sectarian conceit, not to see fruitful branches of the Church which are not yet Episcopal in polity. Still, one must see that this form has been the most continuous, œcumenical and elastic one. Historical circumstances justified the Protestant Churches on the Continent in letting go this factor, in their potent protest against the corruptions of the Catholic Church. And the magnificent and beneficent work of these Churches for four centuries, prove Hooker's contention that the historic Episcopate is not necessary to the *being* of a Church.<sup>1</sup>

The impartial spectator need say but little as to Discipline. It is essential in any body, in order to its doing its work. Any institution must be authoritative in order to be disciplinary and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. at length my *Studies in Hegel's Philosophy of Religion*, Appendix on *Christian Unity*.



educative. No church has ever held to its special forms of discipline being final. As Article XXXIV of the *Articles of Religion* of the Protestant Episcopal Church puts it: "Every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change and abolish ceremonies or rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying."

Finally, the impartial student will say, that everyone who belittles the Church and her ways, is weakening her power for good. The maintenance of the Church is to the Gospel, what the maintenance of the body is to the soul. He is a novelist in spirit, who could expect either to see an institutionalized form of a religion of the Spirit, or to have a Church of the future sectarianized from the Church of the ages.

II. *Creed and Doctrine*.—The impartial spectator of institutions sees how every institution naturally and necessarily begets dogma—some intellectual expression of its principles, constitution, by-laws and objects and methods. This is more particularly true with a teaching institution.

Harnack properly distinguishes between the creeds of the Church, *i. e.*, *The Apostles'* and *The Nicene Creeds*, and the ever-varying doctrines of orthodoxy. As a matter of fact these Catholic creeds of the Church have been held in common by both Romanists and Protestants. That was one part of the Christian heritage that the Reformers did not give up. They have ever been sacredly guarded as the very Constitution of the teaching Church. In the decay of orthodoxy, this reversion to the Catholic Creeds with increased respect, is a sign of wholesome self-preservation. The decay of orthodoxy harms them not. They abide as the charter of faith, and of freedom from temporary systems of theology. Harnack considers this to be a sign of the Catholicizing of Protestantism. But it is nothing more than a revival of the appreciation of the œcumenical creeds that historical Protestantism has always held.

Technical orthodoxy is well-nigh dead in most of the Protestant Churches. Its doctrines of the verbal inspiration of the

Bible; of sin; of the atonement; its mechanical tritheism; its gloomy Sabbaths and its lurid eschatology, of which the creeds say nothing, have all gone, except as they are conserved in more catholic ideals.

Orthodoxy was essentially rationalistic. Unitarianism was its legitimate child. It dropped the "we believe" for the "I believe" and hence is now in danger of dropping even this affirmation of individual belief. Never an ecclesiastical Pope demanded such subservience of private judgment as did orthodoxy in its palmy days. Its deadly heresy was its limiting God's revelation to one logical system of doctrine, and this is leading to-day to a denial of His revelation in any form. Historical justice can be accorded to the Puritans and their orthodoxy, without making orthodoxy the essence of the Gospel. The mistake of orthodoxy has been threefold: the attempt to arrest the constant metamorphosis to which dogmas are subject; the attempt to hold the provincial and temporary in abstraction from the œcumenical; and the attempt to abstract it from the full concrete life of Christianity and make it to be the essence of that life.

The first escape has been into ethical Christianity. The second has been that opened up by Ritschl—back to the "crystal Christ." The next escape has been into social ethics, or the philanthropic work of "institutional churches"—the service of Christ being interpreted as that of service to fellow men. Great and faithful as have been these three forms of activity, with those who have thrown off the incubus of orthodoxy, we find the common danger to be that of de-religionizing the Church. From ethics to humanitarianism, and from the worship of humanity to secularism, the process goes, when divorced from theology and from the specifically religious life. It is the sense of this danger that is leading to what Harnack decries as the promoting of the authority of Catholic creeds. It is a catholicizing element that is to be welcomed.

III. *Cult or Worship*.—If we were asked to name the spe-

cific factor of the Church that makes for the nurture of the specifically religious life, we should have to say that it is that cult or worship. It is therein that the at-one-ment of man with God is realized. As Loisy says: "History knows no instance of a religion without a *Cult*." And "Christianity had to find a ritual or cease to exist."

The central act of worship has always been that of the sacrifice, as the act of real communion between man and God. Prayer and praise and Scripture reading and the sacraments—the whole of a cult is distinguished by the preponderating emphasis it places upon the divine side of this communion. It is that which elevates man from being a mere secular creature; makes him conscious of his divine kinship, and of the divine graciousness.

So in the Christian Church, the Eucharist, the Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper or the Mass, has always had the central place, as the central act of worship. And, unless the Church of the future abdicates the function of the Church of the ages, she will continue to be a Church with worship as her central fire, her heart, whence she pulsates life into all other of her forms and functions. Whatever other function and ministry for men she may have, she must be a Church with a cult. Its central act of worship must be to celebrate and realize the union of the Divine with the human. It is thus that it will humble and exalt the worshipers, and give them that inspiration of more than human power, in the strength of which they may go forward to fulfill all the various offices of human culture in the larger Kingdom of God. Its chief function must be specifically religious. It is only as it is thus distinctively religious—mystical, if you will—that it can have any permanent ministrant function for a humanity that is incurably religious; minister to the heavenly homesickness of prodigal sons of God; minister in the Divine drama of the education of the race. The Church is not to mistake its central function for that of literature, sci-

ence, art, philosophy; for that of the press or that of social reform.

The Church is not the only minister of God in His work. But her work is to minister to the religious side of man's nature—the side that raises man above himself in merely secular relations. Its function is primal, abiding and central; giving inspiration and significance more than secular to all forms of secular activity. Religion is the central sun of the whole system, that shines that all else may thrive and be of worth.

It may be granted that Protestantism has too frequently neglected this factor in the Church's life. It may be granted that too individualistic a conception of the religious life has tended to throw a shadow upon the place of corporate worship. And so it should be held that signs of a liturgical revival are signs of a new fountain of inspiration for Protestantism.

In all these Catholicizing tendencies, there is no reversion to what is distinctively Roman. Rome has them—that is her Catholic side. But Rome has much besides, that makes her distinctively the Roman Church.

Protestantism has much of distinctively religious and ethical life that Rome lacks. Perhaps it is impossible for our impartial spectator to have an unbiased historical judgment as to the relative worth of these two forms of the visible Church. So far as he can, he must recognize them both as historical phenomena of most momentous significance and worth in the religious nurture of men. He must appreciate the excellences and the defects of both. He must say that the Church in the future will be stronger in proportion as she arms herself with the best of both. He must judge that a reunited Christendom would be more powerful than its present divided form; that a Protestantized Catholic Church, or a Catholicized Protestant Church would be the best form of a nurturing and missionary Church. The Roman Church has the advantage of organic unity. The Protestant Churches have the disadvantage of sectarianism. The first step, then, should be the

organic unification of the Protestant Churches, and the reclaiming their full Catholic heritage of polity, creed and cult. The efficient Church of the future will not be sectarian. The Church that will be strong as the propagator of the Gospel, will be thoroughly corporate—corporate in polity, creed and cult. Its communal forms will work the communal spirit, to the edifying of its members. Divisive individualism, as urged by Sabatier and Harnack, has no promise of a future in religion. Their reduction of religion to a subjective feeling in the heart of the individual, is but a perversion of the fundamental Protestant conception of the personal element in religion, an element that is also in Romanism.

The late Dr. Hedge, a Unitarian preacher, and a professor of Church History in Harvard University, gave the following judgment:

“That the spirit of God may and does sometimes act directly on the soul, without intervention of Church or any secondary agent, is a fundamental principle of Christian doctrine, never to be surrendered. Every fresh dispensation of religion has originated in that way. But practically, for the mass of mankind, the spirit acts through the Church; and every sect that has grounded itself on the principle of private inspiration, from Montanism to Quakerism, has perished utterly, or drags a decadent, dying life. Protestantism did not at the start assume that ground. It was not a protest against the Church as such, but only against certain abuses and corruptions. And Protestantism itself, unless it can recall its separations and atone its schisms, and, renouncing dogmatic willfulness, round itself into one, is doomed to pass away, and be reabsorbed in the larger fold of an œcumenical Church.”

These are strong and notable words, coming from a member of that body that stands foremost in its maintenance of the individualistic point of view. They are the words of one who was both an historian and a philosopher, expressing his objective judgment rather than his private preferences.



If Protestantism cannot do this, what if Rome, which has often shown master strokes of wisdom, should arouse to her opportunity and rise to her duty? What if, dropping her now provincial name and character, Roman, she might seek to re-integrate all Protestantism? It looks like a seeming impossibility. But if the day ever comes that Protestantism ceases to be "a religion of authority," and the Romanism itself can take up the noble fruits and principles of Protestantism, then the time will come when every Christian must answer the question to such Catholicism, why or why not?

One should not look with distrust and alarm on what is called the American party in the Church of Rome. It represents the best intellectual and ethical forces now making for a true Catholicizing of Romanism, to meet the needs of the higher life of the Protestant world. The very able Father Hecker, a pervert from the Episcopal Church, was, as is generally recognized in France, the author of *l'américanisme*. Among the present representatives of this advanced or liberal interpretation of the Roman Catholic Church, are Archbishops Ireland, Gibbons, Keane and Spalding; the Very Rev. Mgr. O'Connell, Rector of the Catholic University of America, and Professor Zahm. Loyal to their Church of the ages, they have sympathies that are reaching out towards ways of adapting it to the needs of the modern world, that are temptingly calling to many who would turn a deaf ear to the Ultramontanists and Jesuits in the Roman Church. I believe that they are in earnest in their irenical temper and attitude.

The Church exists as the religious organ within the larger Kingdom of God in the life of the world. She must adapt herself to the other functions as they change and grow—to the political, intellectual and practical acquisitions of men; assimilate their acquisitions, tardily, it is true, for that is the conservative genius of all institutions. To keep fully abreast with modern thought and scientific theories would be premature. The Church whose chief energies are spent in this constant read-

justment, will miss its proper work; will be diluted into a weak form of other functions, and lose its own distinctive genius and *raison d'être*.

The future of Christianity is bound up with the future of the Church. There is no other human instrumentality for the preservation and propagation of the Gospel.

Hence, even an outsider would advise the stanch maintenance of the external Church, and the re-unification of its various parts, as the wisest means for its continued existence and the successful performance of its function.

The following practical suggestion is obvious. Let no religious man speak disrespectfully of the form of any other man's religion. Let Christians of every Church resolutely restrain the critical attitude towards other Churches. Let us Protestants cease from the vulgar form of criticising the Roman Catholics that has been too common, and let Roman Catholics recognize the religious life nurtured by the Protestants as kin with their own. Let every sect at least recognize that there are other sects, with the same fundamental end and function of nurturing the religious life.

To the religious man, the meanest flower of religion that blows should be regarded as sacred. With contempt for none and with charity for all, is a temper that will do more to promote the religious life of our generation, than any form of intellectual reconciliation of religion with modern culture.

We have seen in a previous chapter how religion transcends and fulfills all forms of morality; how it is the transcendent element that erects a man above himself as a finite secular form of empirical existence; how it is the completion and fruition of all that is truly human; how it is the beatitude of soul, the beatitude of mankind, which when experienced, makes man more than conqueror in all the transitory vicissitudes of life and death, because it gives him the freedom and perfect peace that only come with at-one-ment with God. Science gives us reconciliation with an abstract phase of experience, and is doing a benefi-

cent work in rationalizing that side of experience. Organized religion has always stood for the work of concrete reason in dealing with another phase of truly human experience—fully as real, to say the least, as the phase with which science deals. There is no call for any age-long religion to abdicate its specific work, at the bidding of the scientific culture of any age. She can stand boldly and firmly on the vantage ground of centuries of beneficent results. Only so far as her interpretation of the religious life has become interwoven with views of a less adequate scientific description of the physical world, does she need to re-adjust herself to the new views, and then, not hastily, nor until the new scientific view is firmly established. The religious life can be nurtured in a religion that is not up to date with modern scientific views. Besides the change of the setting cannot be made rapidly, except at the peril of the religious life. For that life is largely in the realm of feeling. And the attachments of feeling, domestic, social or religious, cannot be rudely dealt with in the merely intellectual way.

Conservatism is essential to life. All such detachments must be made slowly. Besides new views of science are often put forward as divorced from and incompatible with any religion. That is, some who speak in the name of science, contend that religion is incredible in any form in face of the new views of science. When this is done, I do not see why religion, as the expression of the more concrete reason of humanity, should not, for its own self-preservation, decline to give up all for nothing. What has been acquired has been acquired, in religion as well as in science. There should be some irenical *rapprochement* on the side of those representatives of science, who essay to give science a metaphysical interpretation. Otherwise their *obiter dicta* may fairly be met with a flat refusal. Romanist and Protestant should join hands and forces here.

Sabatier emphasizes the *psychological* necessity of being religious. That is good, and upon the whole true—as true as the psychological necessity of man's being scientific. That

seems to be the verdict of history. But the necessity of being religious can be put upon larger and firmer grounds. Man is by nature a religious being, using nature here, not in the empirical, psychological sense, but in Aristotle's sense of man's ideal or perfected nature. Psychologically, religion might be a disease or an illusion. So also might science be, as Von Hartmann argues. Comte held religion to be a disease found only at the cradle of nations. But his later founding of the "religion of humanity," shows that he came to have a more concrete view of the nature of man.

Let us put the question thus:—"What is the chief end of man?" Take all man's secular activities in practical life—domestic, social and political; and all in his intellectual life—science and history and literature. Abstract resolutely and absolutely from art, religion and philosophy, and we have, at the utmost, a finite, secular end and aim. Beyond lies the existential source and fount whence issue the empirical phenomena of mind and matter. Spencer calls it the incomprehensible Power, the Unknown and Unknowable, the Absolute whose "existence is a necessary datum of consciousness."

Is the gulf between phenomena and the unknown source and substance of phenomena unknowable or impassable? That is the root question. Art, religion and philosophy affirm that it is not. Schopenhauer found in art the only means of bridging the gulf. Religion, historically, has always been a practical affirmation of the transcendence of the limit. Philosophy has always been an intellectual affirmation of the same. The absolute is not the unknown. Art, religion and philosophy give us, respectively, the Beautiful, the Good and the True, as the spheres in which man's finite nature finds its supreme vocation and fruition.

Now it must be considered that every form of modern culture which denies this, really belittles the conception of the nature and destiny of man. It is an "either—or" here. Either the gulf is passable or not. If it is not, then we have the merely

secular and phenomenal conception of man's nature. It if is, we have the other conception. The power of ideals is mighty. As a man thinks and feels so he does.

Now in particular, religion stands for the affirmation that, psychologically and historically at least, mankind has always passed the gulf, into organic unity with the source of all that is finite and empirical.

To the question, "What is the chief end of man?" religion has universally answered, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to *enjoy Him* forever," though it was left for the Westminster divines to frame this short and comprehensive reply to the short but most momentous question, "What is the chief end of man?"—the supreme vocation, the final cause, the true nature of man and humanity?

From the empirical standpoint, the whole of modern science and culture are as empirical as religion—all being relative to man's psychological nature. On this ground alone, religion as the organized, long-lived and persistent self-expression of human nature or reason, has just as valid justification as any form of science or intellectual culture. It can demand the exercise of its function as being on a par, as to rationality, with them. But when the thing is thought through; when the relativity of science as restricted to the finite and the phenomenal is seen; when the limitations of the categories which it uses are seen, then philosophy gives religion its absolute intellectual justification. To be conscious of a limit, is to have already transcended the limit. Even Spencer cannot avoid this confession. The finite is known to be finite, only because the infinite is known to be. The knowledge of the Infinite, and the Absolute, and the Perfect, is prior to, and implied, in the knowledge of the finite as finite. Philosophy, as well as art and religion, bridges the gulf, and in doing so gives the intellectual justification of the transcendence made practically in art and religion.

After philosophy comes the philosophy of religion, to validate its function and to make a comparative estimate of its va-



rious forms—non-Christian and Christian, Roman and Protestant, in their function of reconciliation, of making man at-one with God, “whose service is perfect freedom.”

If religion is incredible from the standpoint of modern science; if modern science is—though as strict science it says nothing in the matter—irreligious, as well as scientific, then religion may demand that science reconcile itself with religion.

Man, as rational dares, nay, must be religious. To put the matter strongly, one might rationally say that the religious interpretation of experience given by any religion of authority, pagan or Christian, is more concretely true than that given by any agnostic form of modern culture; that if choice must be made between religion and no science, or science and no religion, that the concretely rational and human might resolutely cling to religion.

“ . . . Great God! I’d rather be  
A pagan suckled in a creed outworn.”

Better the man nurtured in any form of “a religion of authority,” than the man without any religious nurture.

Religion must claim her right to be left free to perform her truly human function. It should first of all, to use Plato’s expression, mind its own business. Apologetics are secondary. The attempt to continuously re-adjust herself to the kaleidoscopic changes of modern culture diverts her from her proper function. The effect of this effort too often is the perplexity that baffles activity.

“The centipede was happy quite, until the toad in fun  
Asked, pray which leg comes after which?  
Which raised her mind to such a pitch  
She lay distracted in the ditch  
Considering how to run.”

This doggerel, vulgar though it be, aptly depicts the condition of very many religious men to-day, who are trying to harmonize their religion with modern culture.

The truth is that the religious man should dare, first of all,

to be religious. He should dare to repeat to modern culture the words I recently saw inscribed on a sun-dial:—

“You go by the shadow,  
I go by the Sun.”

If he needs it, he can have the psychological, the historical and the philosophical justification for his doing this.

Sabatier justifies the subjective psychological side. We have seen the limitations of this.

Loisy justifies it historically. The danger here is either that of accepting the brute-actual as the ultimate-rational, or the danger of the historical method—that of sitting apart, and

“Holding no form of creed  
But contemplating all.”

If one must have an intellectual justification for being a religious conformist, he must go to philosophy. And the Catholic philosophy of the ages gives the justification, the vindication, the apologetics. We have objected to the reconciliation offered by Sabatier and Harnack, because they yield all, and retain nothing, except the religion of mere subjectivity. We have commended the practical effect, for the time, of the whole Ritschlian school, in enabling one to dare to have the religion of mere subjectivity. We have faulted it with being, in the long run, no more than the ostrich's device of hiding its head in the sand. The truth is, in fact, that in being religious, man has a right to be *erect*.

If there be any warfare between religion and an irreligious modern culture, then it behooves men of all forms of religion to join hands and forces.

“The religion of the spirit” is as incredible to an irreligious culture as any “religion of authority.” The religions of authority—Romanism and Protestantism—should in every way possible recognize each other as allies in the contest for man's inalienable right to religious nurture.

Man, humanity is not, as agnostic modern culture asserts,

*securus adversus Deum*. Man, humanity is only *securus cum Deo*. Religion is the practical bond that realizes this organic unity, and makes one secure and free in the experience of a religion of authority. Let the most cultivated man, the man fully abreast with modern thought and science, then, frankly and unreservedly *dare* to be religious—to be a conformist to some form of a religion of authority, and therein to find his most concrete form of freedom. Let him say to modern culture and science :

“You go by the shadow,  
I go by the Sun.”

## CHAPTER IV

### THE HISTORICAL METHOD

(1) *Scientific*

(2) *Philosophical*

The question of the old catechism—who made you or the world or anything in the world, is out of date in this age. At least the answer given would be that of Topsy: “Nobody made me, I’ve growned.” Nobody has made anybody. Every body, every form of life, every form of human belief and institution has “*growned*”—evolved, developed out of lower forms, and these out of still lower forms and so on *ad infinitum*, so that “origin” in its original sense is nonsense. As in Zeno’s paradox, that the swift-footed Achilles could never catch the slow-footed tortoise, on the hypothesis of the infinite divisibility of space, so here no origin can be reached because of the infinite regress in time. There is always a past, which is the cause of the present. But that past was once a present and had a causal past. But practically some empirical “given” is generally assumed. At best this corresponds to the smart boy’s answer to the question, “Who made you?” “God made me *so big*,” measuring off the length of his arm,—“and I grew the rest myself.”

Let us accept the current dictum that ours is “the historical age” in contrast with the theological age and that of the eighteenth century of abstract rationalism. It is needless to say that scientific men have fully abandoned the categories of “the age of reason,” which looked upon everything as full-formed, definite and distinct, while ignoring the constitutive relations between them. It is only an anachronism, when they appeal to this abstract reason for a reason for any doctrine. The modern

scientific view is always comparative, genetic and historical. It deals with relations between things as constitutive of the things, and with the history of any creed or deed, as its explanation. That is, it uses "the historical method" of explaining everything.

What is meant by the historical method?

*History* means, primarily, a narration of the chronological stages through which anything has passed. It is the narrative of change. Human history, however, is no longer merely a narrative of kings, popes and lords many—Carlyle's great-man theory. It is rather an attempted reconstruction of the changes in the whole concrete life of the people of a given epoch, as connected with preceding and succeeding epochs—each change in the social whole being accounted for by the changes in the preceding and environing social wholes. That is, it has abandoned the eighteenth century individualistic, for the modern socialistic, views of man. History is still the narrative of changes, but of changes with long-lived social organisms.

*Method* is a systematic way of procedure in the study of any subject. Mathematics is the method employed by science, in physics. So history is the method now employed in the study of human institutions. That is, the "what" of anything is sought in its past history. The history of a thing gives the causes and nature of the thing. Thus the historical method applied to any creed or organization, gives its explanation by means of their historical origin and series of transformations. The *how* it came about, tells *what* it is.

In the use of this method, the look is too often only backward, while the forward look demanded by the truly human is neglected. That is the vice of the empirical school of which we shall shortly speak—the vice of banishing teleology from the historical explanation of human institutions—of neglecting the force of ideals in lifting upwards, while seeing with keen vision only the mechanical forces at work to force forward—forward, that is, in time and space, for there can be no moral or human



forward without ideals and goals. In fact the historical school, like that of physical science, has come to accept Comte's three stages or methods of thought: the *Theological*, the *Metaphysical* and the *Positive*.<sup>1</sup>

Roughly speaking, according to Comte, the *Theological* dominated the seventeenth century, the *Metaphysical* the eighteenth century, the *Positive* coming into predominance in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The theological mode of thought looked upon nature as ruled by many supernatural beings, and finally by one God. A supernatural revelation gave men dogmatic truth, and a dogmatic philosophy dominated their study of nature—both as to efficient and final causes.

Then came the *metaphysical* age. The unhistorical eighteenth century set up the principle of an abstract reason. Its belief in the absolute truths of reason was just as dogmatic as the theological view. The light of reason was considered the sufficient and never failing source of truth. The absolutely certain principles of reason, gave the standard by which to weigh and reject political and theological dogmas, and all the institutions they represented. They also furnished the means for building brand new forms—new governments and social institutions, a new religion and code of morals.<sup>2</sup> Nothing need to grow, it could be manufactured to order, under the light of the natural reason of man. Natural religion, or the religion of reason, took the form of Deism in England. Natural rights,

<sup>1</sup> Comte's *Cours de Philosophie Positive*. cf. Appendix, note 5.

<sup>2</sup> Bentham is a good representative of this view. He had a contempt for the past and was without any historical sense in regard to the growth of institutions. He thought that he could manufacture codes and constitutions to order under the sole rubric of *utility*. They did not need to grow, as the common law and the constitution of England had done. That was wasting time. It was his ungratified ambition to be permitted to prepare a new constitution and code of laws for his own, or some other country. He might have profited by Locke's disastrous folly in preparing "the fundamental Constitution of the Carolinas," a century before.

supplanted the conferred and acquired rights of citizenship, and natural law ruled in the world of nature—the God of Deism being an Absentee.

Truths of reason were just as dogmatic, uncriticised categories of thought, as those of the theological stage. The sublime, absolute faith of its exponents in the deliverances of reason was scarcely less than that of the supranaturalists in revealed truths. They found mathematical proof of everything thus possible. In the study of nature they were the founders of mathematical physics. But even here Comte places them in the *meta-physical* stage, because they believed in efficient natural forces. At bottom, this was identical with the theological metaphysics. Phenomena of nature were supposed to be the effects of some efficient causes—physical force, vital force, plastic force, tendencies of nature, the force of gravitation, the *vis medicatrix naturæ*. Thus they gave as the efficient cause of water rising in a pump, the fact that nature abhors a vacuum. Disease was as real an entity for them, as the wrath of a god for the theological dogmatists. But Comte held all efficient cause to be unreal. "What are called causes," he says, "whether these are first or final causes, are absolutely inaccessible, and the search for them is a vain search." When *Positivism* is reached, men give up all belief in causes and attend only to the relations of similarity and succession of phenomena.

Science is bidden to abandon all these personified abstractions as being no more real or knowable than angels or demons. Comte banished all anthropomorphism from science as an intellectual sin, as science had banished it from theology.<sup>1</sup> Though Comte's phenomenalism and positivism—practically

<sup>1</sup> An unrighteous remnant of metaphysics still lurks in many scientific conceptions. The reality of atoms, forces, efficient causes, laws of nature, were held by Comte to belong to the metaphysical stage of thought. Science should only deal with phenomena and their succession and coexistence. "L'Atome et la force! Voilà L'univers." Positivism stigmatizes this as metaphysics, little better than Theology.

identical with that of Neo-Kantians—is rapidly becoming the regnant view in science, it would not be correct to characterize the nineteenth century by the term Positivism. It would be better to characterize it as “the historical age” and reserve the term Positivism for the twentieth century.

The method of the nineteenth century has been the genetic one—an attempt to understand everything, especially every institution, by a patient regressive study of its antecedent forms and environment. Springing as it did from romanticism in literature, and idealism in philosophy, the historical method, in its earliest stages, directly contravened positivism by its use of both efficient and final causes. It dealt primarily with human interests and human institutions. It had the humanitarian heart and humanitarian ideals. All history showed the efficient forces leading man upwards towards his ideals. It sought for the essence of humanity in the lower stages of these institutions, and then traced this essence manifesting itself in freer and loftier forms. History was the biography of humanity, and its story always had significance and worth. The human reason too had its biography. But this was always the history of the implicit reason coming to be more explicit, both on its speculative and practical side, through the hard fought struggles to attain its majority. It was not looked upon as a miraculous birth from something lower and heterogeneous, but as a process of self-development. Thus this method still kept the metaphysical elements of potentialities, causes, tendencies of nature, of the eighteenth century view. But it put these in human nature, rather than in physical nature, as that had done. It found, the efficient cause of any state or epoch or institution, to be the genius of its people, the spirit of the times, the essence of the institution—potent potentialities that were self-developing towards their goals. The theme was that of ideal men struggling through history towards self-realization. Its tone was thoroughly idealistic and optimistic. Great and inspiring was the work done in this its pristine form and vigor. Nothing

human was alien to it, and so the workers probed into all possible archaeological material—back to the time “when Adam delved and Eve span,” of every age and country and institution. Its vast scholarly labors were animated by a love of the truly human, in however lowly form it might be found. It idealized all past forms.

But the spirit of *Positivism* in physical science did not fail to find entrance into the historical school. This change was aided by that of its own inner dialectic. It found any form of human institutions to be relative to its own time and circumstances. Circumstances began to overshadow the human element—the spirit of the people, the genius of institutions—which had at first functioned in bringing the on-sweeping tide of development. The insular empiricism of England filtered into the pores of German idealism. This found the ground prepared for it in Kant’s *First Critique*, and invited all to go back from the Kant of the *Second* and *Third Critiques* to the Kant of the *First Critique*, and finally to Comte’s *Positivism*, thus effectually banishing metaphysics in their study both of man and nature.

“Apostles of Circumstance” arose in their own midst. The *environment*, not the spirit of a people, caused the development of language, morals and institutions. Neither conscious nor unconscious purpose is to be seen throughout the transformation. “Climate, food, soil and the general aspect of nature”<sup>1</sup> are the four circumstances that Buckle gives as the efficient causes of the civilization of England. Spencer does not get beyond the category of circumstances. The vital seed, germ, essence, spirit is finally smothered by the ever increasing husk of circumstance (environment). Everything is reduced to circumstances—standing round what but other circumstance! Great verily is circumstance! It no longer takes a man, much less a God, to beget a man and his civilizing, moralizing institutions. The teleological judgment was banished, while the rem-

<sup>1</sup> Buckle’s *History of Civilization in England*, II, Chap. II.

nant of the metaphysical stage of science was kept in the form of the causal judgment. Circumstances *caused* the changes. But *Positivism* had ruled causality out, as a remnant of the metaphysical stage of thought. Science had become positive; had banished the reified abstraction of causality and decided to hold to the facts—phenomena and their sequences. Thus logically, no universal judgments are possible. Everything is relative, nothing causal. That is the *hereditas damnosa* of theology and rationalism, which has finally been foresworn by the leaders in science.

So too in history, it was found, that every form of every institution was merely *relative*—the literature of England relative to the social environment (Taine) as that is relative to “food, soil, climate and general aspect of nature,” (Buckle) as these are relative to geological changes, which are relative—well, there is a never-ending regress of circumstances that stand round no beginning and are leading to no end in particular. It all depends upon circumstance. And finally, when relativity is taken in earnest, there is no dependence, no causal dependence of any one thing upon another and the historical method, along with the historical spirit, has given place to *Positivism* even in the humanities. We have now the *Science of History*, or *scientific history*, which, like physical science, has banished to the theological limbo, both efficient and final causes.

Man, the truly human, is no longer in history, much less God. Circumstances, with no other than “chronological sequence and co-existence,” well, the world is full of relativities, and it is the duty of the science of history to invent economical formulæ of description, which are no longer causal laws, but mental, conceptual short-hand descriptions. In history, and especially in sociology, we have marvelously helpful generalizations; intellectual, conceptual laws of *social statics* that have been of the greatest practical service, and profound and true construction of laws of *Dynamic Sociology* (Ward), with all the dynamite of casual efficiency taken out of them. Then we



have the *Economical Interpretation of History*, where the one dynamic circumstance is man's need and greed for gold or its goods, rather than for the truly human good (Giddings). None can do other than admire and be thankful for the good work done by this school of *Positivists* in Sociology. But we must ask no questions as to efficient and final causes. These terms, when used from the exigencies of language and of the understanding of men, are at best but figurative. We are only in the sphere of relativity, of the sequence and co-existence of phenomena in time. Time is the one universal maw, in which all things rise, ripen and rot—all being relative stages of relativity. The old mythology of *Chronos* devouring his offspring is upon us. *Why* anything should rise and ripen rather than rot, only God wots, if God there be, where there is naught but relativity. This is a question that no scientific historian will ask, much less deign to answer. It is politely referred to theologians and philosophers who profess to know more than the phenomenal, to those who

“—doubt not, thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs.”

We shall note this limitation of positivism in history later on. We shall ask whether it is truly human not to ask this question, and whether the rise and ripening of human institutions are explicable without a more or less conscious apprehension of purpose—of the why and whereto of humanity's struggle out of beast towards God-sonship. But to return to the historical school, with the historical sense—for positivism in history is no longer “the historical school,” and we now have the *Science of History*.

The historical school revolutionized the abstract *doctrinaire* view of all human institutions. It studied their past to understand and explain their present forms. It could not accept its mechanical conception of reason, and its mechanical ability to manufacture new and true forms for state, religion, and society, without any organic relation to past forms. Freed from the cynical estimate of the past, from the conceited rationalism

of the "Age of Reason," the Romantic-Idealistic school believed in the dynamics of life. They believed not in a dead past, but in the present, living only as in vital continuity with the past. The mood was that of a lofty humanitarianism as opposed to the cynical utilitarianism which said, let the dead bury the dead, but follow thou thine own reason and comfort. They recognized that they were the heirs of the ages past—that they had entered into a heritage, won by the toil and life-blood of their ancestors. They sought to re-discover and re-construct the dead past of humanity and make it a living present. They had no merely archaeological interest. They had a generic human interest. The past was their own past and, as such, the parent of their own present. They sought to honor their parents in seeking to reproduce a picture of their life and times. Even if their ancestors were savages, they were noble savages, and they sought for the essential human, rather than for the accidental brutish, in them. Thus only could they account for the humane and the noble in their descendants.

Humanity was one organic life, battling for development through the ages. They would read—re-discover the minutest circumstances in the life and times of the earlier forms of this human process of self-realization.

Boundless wealth of painstaking scholarship was spent in the drudgery of the details of research, to trace the growth and development of present forms of language, literature, art and social institution—all for the love of the truly human; all for the sake of appreciating the heritage of the present from the past.

In jurisprudence, the historical school held that law, like the language of a people, is the result of the genius of a people; the forms that its life adopts for self-preservation and self-realization. All forms of law are regarded with respect. Earlier forms are the parents of present forms. No modern form is absolutely novel. To understand the modern form, there came the work of historical or comparative jurisprudence.

In the study of ethics, sociology, psychology, politics; of every form in which the human spirit has actualized itself, the historical or *genetic* method was applied. Their past history became their biographical genesis. They all, like Topsy, "grewed." And the narration of their changes is their historical explanation. It is needless to go into detail as to how far this method invaded and transformed nearly all departments of thought, including even that of physical science. This has been well done by the late Professor Henry Sidgwick.<sup>1</sup>

It is needless, too, to dwell upon the worth of the work done by this method, in all the fields where it has been employed. This has been done so often and so well by its enthusiastic exponents, that it has become almost a truism that this dominant method has the final word to say on all things that have a history.

In science, evolution is a form of the historical method applied to nature. Nothing new is ever created in the realm of nature, but all things come to be by almost imperceptible changes. And then, too, nothing is what it is except by means of its relations to other series of changes. The whole point of view is that of ever-changing relations, between atoms, forces and things in a universe of changing forces, so correlated, that no one force or thing is independent. That is, the categories used in describing the changes of form in nature, are those of relativity—cause and effect, thing and environment, substance and qualities, essence and phenomena, potentiality and actuality; endless mediation through relations between forces which are only transient forms of one force.

Students of human history too often fall into the use of these categories of physical science. This is the vice of what is called scientific history, or the *science of history*. It treats man and men as things, which change and grow only as they are changed by other things. Mechanical necessity is the god

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy, its Scope and Relations*, by the late Professor Henry Sidgwick.

which rules in all the changing forms of human creeds and deeds. It seeks to trace the development of human institutions by a study of the external conditions of their various stages of change. It neglects the spiritual element that has ever been the life that has reacted upon and modified the environment. It neglects the power of ideals—the implicit impulse towards fuller rationality, immanent in all the merely external changes, that changes them from mere change to a development.

At least this seems to have become the dominant tendency of the school. Properly speaking there are two schools who use the historical method: (1) The *realistic* and (2) the *idealistic*, or the (1) *scientific* and the (2) *philosophical* schools.

## SECTION I. THE SCIENTIFIC SCHOOL OF THE HISTORICAL METHOD.

I. Let us make a critical examination of the limitations of the empirical school, which drive us to the philosophical school for a more concrete view of the *how* and the *why* of human institutions. To do this we may first give a very brief statement of the problems and methods of (a) Science, (b) Philosophy.

(a) The problem of science is to give a classified and systematized short-hand description of all physical phenomena—that is, it seeks to make generalizations as to the sequences and relations between phenomena, that may be called laws of nature. There can be no hesitancy in the acceptance of the magnificent and colossal results of science in the fields of nature and of history. It is not the methods and results of science that are criticised, but the metaphysical theories of many of its exponents, who are loudest in their objurgation of metaphysics. Their ontology, or doctrine of what is real, is that atoms, even though they bear the mark of being “manufactured articles”; that motion, force, cause, space and time are not only empirical but

absolute realities; that laws of nature are causally efficient workers; in a word that their phenomenal world is the real world, and that their conceptual formulas of description are the ultimate explanation of all concrete reality.

Not only have they misrepresented science to the popular mind, but they are themselves deluded into the metaphysical belief in all these anthropomorphic superstitions — veritable fetishes. Those who are easily the intellectual leaders in the work of science have discarded all this bad metaphysics. They may or may not be agnostic. Their science as such, however, has nothing to do with agnosticism. They frankly say that science has nothing to do with atom, mass, energy, laws of nature *as real entities*. These conceptions, along with that of evolution, are only used as an economic, conceptual short-hand for resuming, classifying and holding data of phenomenal experience, which data are the sense-impressions of *conscious subjects*. These data they construct by means of the conceptual short-hand, into a systematic and useful description of them.

Thus they say that science has nothing to do with entities or with *efficient* causes any more than with final causes; that what we call physical forces are simply symbols, like  $x$ ,  $y$ ,  $z$ , which help us to construct relations between the data of the sense-perceptions—of a percipient. “There are no causes and effects in nature. Nature simply is our sensations. Cause and effect are a mental short-hand for reproducing the facts.” “Causes and effects, therefore, are things of thought, having an economical office.”<sup>1</sup> They have generally come to accept John Stuart Mill’s definition of matter as a “permanent possibility of sensation”—in a percipient, and atoms as thought symbols, like  $x$  and  $y$ , useful working tools in analysis and classification. Atoms are not some real things in space. They are supersensuous, and have no real existence apart from man’s conceptive faculty. The determining compulsion or necessity of laws of nature is only a logical necessity—one of consistency of our

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mach’s *Science of Mechanics*, pp. 483-485.



conceptual language. In fine, they have purged such terms as cause, energy, force, and attraction of the superstitious animism still put into them by the metaphysical scientists. Idolaters of reified abstractions, such exponents of science, who are neither few nor insignificant, are accountable for much of the poor and anti-theistic metaphysics of the day. They need to go to school to the others who have done much of the higher work of science. These latter, while using the same terminology and insisting upon the application of the mechanical view to all phases of sensuous reality, have declined to reify this terminology and theory, and thus to recrudescence the superstitions of animism. They affirm that science is only a descriptive, and not a causal explanation, and that its work is that inventing short-hand economical formulæ for the description of the course of events.<sup>1</sup> That is, they call modern science and history back to *Positivism* as a *method*, not as a *metaphysic*.

Science is an analysis of experience to discover sequences and system in all sensuous phenomena. But it is a higher sort of knowledge than that of mere sense perception, which gives a collection of things and events. Science seeks the *relations* between all things. It finds things, indeed, to be really constituted by relations. Nothing in the world is single. A depends upon B. Every thing depends upon other things. There are no self-subsisting, independent individual things. Every thing is only phenomenal—a passing form of change of relations or a transient form of sensuous phenomena. Science seeks the laws of these changes—the universal throbbing through the particulars and constitutive of them, being in this way a return to scholastic realism. However, this conception of the laws of nature being real forces, and doing real things, is not held by the chiefs of science. It is a legacy from the metaphysical age bequeathed to the popular mind, and to the semi-popular mind of a large number of scientific men. It is still often heard said that the laws of nature do so and so. But laws of nature are, for ad-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Karl Pearson's *Grammar of Science*.

vanced scientific thought, simply brief, short-hand descriptions of large ranges of sequences of our sense-impressions. Gravitation does not attract one mass to another. Gravitation is not an actual force. The law of gravitation is an hypothetical relation that best describes a number of changes.<sup>1</sup>

Science is much more than "organized common sense." Science verily transforms the world of perception, as any textbook on physics will show. Things are reduced to quantities of forces and relations, so that the water known by the chemist— $H_2O$ —is no longer the water as known by perception. The chemist's analysis of it must seem to be a fiction to common sense, unless it accepts the chemist's knowledge on mere authority.

Science does its work with certain principles of knowledge. It is dogmatic in its use of these categories, and therefore has no true valuation of them. There is, however, one of its chief categories that has been subjected to such criticism as to eviscerate it of all its primitive significance—that is, the category of causality. Modern science at first used this conception as that of a real force doing something, causing the various forms of change. But cause is no longer conceived as a separate thing acting upon or producing another passive thing called effect. The dialectic forced this conception into that of reciprocity. The cause cannot be a cause without an effect. But the cause thus depends upon the effect, which thus becomes the cause of the cause as well as its effect. Then the idea of real efficiency in cause was easily dispelled. Thus *N* is the cause of *O*. But *N* itself is only an effect of *M* and that of *L* and so on not only through the alphabet, but throughout all the changes of time. Nowheres is anything truly causal to be found. Again, scientific men found that this regress *ad infinitum* led logically to a First and real cause, so long as cause was conceived on the analogy of will. But to-day that ghost of the old spiritualism has been banished from Science, and we have the harmless but help-

<sup>1</sup> Karl Pearson's *Grammar of Science*, p. 86.

ful conception of cause as the uniform antecedence of one event in relation to another. The same evisceration of the conception of force has also been made, taking all force out of it. So also laws of nature are only short-hand descriptive formula for holding together, in thought, a lot of sense impressions. Science has purged its categories of their earlier anthropomorphism. Kant, Comte and Mill differ but little in their eviscerating causality of all causal efficiency. It becomes simply the best working formula of systematization of changes.<sup>1</sup>

As Bentham said the word "ought," ought to be banished from ethics, so they say that causal efficiency ought to be banished from the scientific conception of causality. Cause and effect are no longer considered as distinct things, but merely as the earlier and later stages in a *continuous* process. Science has not to discover that one thing causes another. There is no one and another—with intervals or break of space and time between. All is motion, process *πάντα ῥεῖ*. The stream glides and forever glides, and science seeks only to discover general formula of description of this gliding process. Science thus becomes only the highest intellectual form of description. The earlier conceptions of laws of nature, efficient forces and physical necessity have passed away, and we have only uniformities in nature as our best descriptive formula. The best type of scientific explanation, is that of mathematical physics, or me-

<sup>1</sup> Professor Ernst Mach was one of the earliest of scientists to propound this view of the mechanical theory *minus* the mythology which is held by many physicists. Mach considers all the conceptions of matter, force, cause, atoms, mass as having a merely *economical* office—as good intellectual machinery for a useful representation of an abstract phase of the universe, but in no way real (Cf. Mach's *The Science of Mechanics*, Chaps. IV, V and Appendix). In the preface to the third edition of this work he refers to Karl Pearson's *Grammar of Science* as representing essentially similar views, banishing metaphysics from the concepts of mechanics, which are never perceptions or any part of sensuous reality. (Cf. et. Ward's *Naturalism and Agnosticism* for application of this view of the mechanical theory, against mechanical metaphysics.)

chanics. Hence the mechanical view of the world that science aims at in its descriptions.

Laplace's *Mécanique Céleste* was such a description of the starry worlds above, that there was no need of the hypothesis of a God. But to-day the bad metaphysics of the earlier form of mechanics, which caused it to be a veritable nightmare to the moral nature of man, is passing away.<sup>1</sup> It is now recognized that the materialism of earlier science was only metaphysics. Matter, atoms, laws, causes are all now emptied of the metaphysics which made them so obnoxious to the human spirit. They are all merely economic, conceptual forms that science uses for symbolical description. Matter is non-matter in motion. Atoms, ether-squirts, vortex-rings, mass-points, electrons and ions all mental conceptions; mathematical ideals for a mechanical description of the routine of sense impressions, and not themselves sense-impressions, *i. e.*, not sensuous realities for science. At first they were fetishes, now they are acknowledged to be only the most convenient and efficient fictions.

The mechanical theory of the physical universe, emptied of its metaphysics, is undoubtedly a most useful theory, for a description of one phase of reality. There are valid reasons for pressing its use into biology and all forms of human history. Only let its *limitations* be recognized and then, within its sphere, scientists can say "so much mechanics, so much knowledge and so much pre-diction." Emptied of its metaphysics, as it now is, by men of science who think—as Ostwald, Mach, Kirchhoff, Kelvin, Heilmholtz, it is emptied of its horror to the human spirit. It is a useful artificial, conceptual contrivance for a practical purpose. It is so much knowledge, but only of a certain kind, under presuppositions and categories which are utterly inadequate to describe the full, concrete reality of the universe. For the universe is not a mere *quantity*, and wher-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix, Note 4 for quotation from *Romanes* expressing this effect.

ever we pass out of the quantitative view of reality, we pass beyond the limits of mechanism. At least mechanism becomes subordinate to the categories of life, teleology, and ultimately, to that of self-consciousness.

(b) But with this we pass to *Philosophy* as a form of knowing reality that transcends that of science, as science does of that of naïve common sense. Here we must insist that it is not another world that is known, but it is the same *experience* that is known in a higher form. We cannot accept the "divide and rule" offer of science, when she offers us the unknowable and keeps the knowable, as she means when she says "give us the relative and phenomenal sense world and you may have the absolute, noumenal world." Philosophy is not the knowledge of some special province of experience, but a special kind of knowledge of all experience, as a totality or an organic system.

The problem of philosophy is the comprehension of concrete experience, as science is that of an abstract phase of it. That is, its problem is the ultimate nature of reality, in the duality of all experience. This duality is that of subject and object, of knower and known. It may begin with epistemology—the theory of knowing, or a criticism and organization of the various concepts or categories used in knowing. But it goes on to ontology, or the science of real being as known most truly by the highest category. It shows the implicit contradictions of the lower categories used by science, criticising themselves into categories of real causality, real independence or self-relation, teleology, life, volitional mind, or absolute Self-conscious Personality, in the light of which all lower forms of knowing are to be re-interpreted. It is, I have said, an attempted knowledge of *concrete* experience. This concrete experience includes both subject and object, knower and known as indissoluble elements of experience. Science *abstracts* the *objects* from this concrete experience, and treats the physical



world as an independent form of existence. It forgets that nothing external exists except "*plus me*,"—*plus* the knower.

In concrete experience the known cannot be separated from the knower, except by an abstraction, and that made by a conscious mind. The phenomenal world is that which appears to mind, or is a manifestation of self-consciousness. The object, the known, the external world apart from the knower, is not the real. The world *minus* the knower is an abstraction, and science of this abstraction is abstract science. If the real were only that which exists in space, and both the real and space existed independently of the knower, then science might claim to know the real. Even that pronounced empiricist, the late Professor Bain, says: "We are incapable of discussing the existence of an independent material world; the very act is a contradiction. We can only speak of a world presented *to our minds*." Now philosophy contends against the leaving of this "plus me" factor, this mental coefficient, out of the total experience to be known. And it contends still more strongly against the attempt to evolve this "plus me" element out of the abstract external world—the conscious out of the unconscious, or to treat it as mere *epiphenomenon* or by-product, a *quantité négligeable*.

"Am I the abandoned orphan of blind chance  
Dropped by wild atoms in disordered dance,  
Or, from an endless chain of causes wrought,  
And of unthinking substance, born with thought?"

And yet that is all that rigid *metaphysical* science can make of man—a mere part of an independent physical universe—though, on its own categories and by its own confession, it can never know anything except the causally dependent and can never, by its regress *ad infinitum*, get a *universe*. Hence, it should never dare formulate universal and invariable laws of uniformities. Relativity, within the realm of abstraction from concrete experience, is the self-imposed limitation of scientific knowledge.

Rigid science, as a knowledge of this phenomenal abstraction, can know nothing of the moral. The "ought to be" is not a space occupying thing and so cannot be known. Will and motive, life and development, thought and self-activity are not sensuous phenomena and so cannot be known by science except as *epiphenomena*, parallel to, but with no causal connection with, physical processes, which are all that science proposes to know.

Soul is thus bowed out of man, as by La Mettrie in his *L'Homme Machine*. Thought is pitched out of the brain, as one of its secretions, by Büchner in his coarse way of stating the more refined views of some forms of the new psychology. Büchner said: "*Ohne Phosphor kein Gedanke*." Cabanis said: "Religion is the product of the smaller intestines." Rigid science does not cover *concrete* experience and therefore does not know real reality. Philosophy claims to approximate towards a comprehension of the *whole* of experience as an *organic* system, and then of the parts of experience, not in abstraction from, but as organic members of this organic system. Its method is that of the analysis of any part of experience, "flower in the crannied wall," or a Jesus on the cross, to see what the "it is" implies, in order to be what it is. Then it follows these necessary implications until it comes to the explicit totality or ultimate ground, of all these existences—out of which they arise, and in which they "live and move and have their being." This is not a mere empirical analysis of *sensuous experience*. For this is not, as Kant, in spite of his *First Critique*, showed once for all, the whole of experience. It is at best the woof, of which the eternal and necessary warp is non-sensuous. Time and space, quantity, causality, life, development, mind are the non-sensuous elements of concrete experience.

Philosophy aims at reaching the crowning and begetting summit of these categories by an analysis of experience, and then seeks to return synthetically upon all the abstract phases

of knowledge, and reinterpret them in the light of the organic system of which they are members. Every finite thing, every abstraction is imperfect. Only in the light of the perfect can their degree of reality be estimated. Thus philosophy deals with the same world, the same experience that is the subject series of things; the second a connection of all physical things, abstracted from mind or consciousness, while the third gives us the infinite connectedness of concrete experience as an organic system of reality—in which there are no merely mechanical parts, but rather organic members. The way up from the “flower in the crannied wall,” must reach its absolute limit—God, ere the way downward can return and really know the flower as it is,—its grade of reality as an organic phase of absolute reality. That is, philosophy comes to criticise the hypostatized abstractions of science, as science does those of common sense. And it does this by the reverse method of science as stated by Spencer: “We must interpret the more developed by the less developed.”<sup>1</sup> Philosophy seeks to interpret the lower by the higher, by virtue of which alone, as its teleological cause, the lower has the grade of reality is now has and has developed from a still lower form.

### *Evolution*

To return to the *historical method*, so far as that works with the concepts of physical science, we find that its central concept is that of development or *evolution*. We have found that under the conceptions of mechanism, there is no place for design for spontaneous or organic activity. We have found the tendency to press this method into the study of biology, physiology and all the forms of human institutions. We merely add that this conception of “so much mechanism, so much science” is too often a regnant conception with those who exploit the historical method. It will be well, then, to examine the theory

<sup>1</sup> Herbert Spencer, *Data of Ethics*, Chap. I. Sec. 2.

of *Mechanical Evolution*. There is evolution and evolution. We need not treat of the popular conception of evolution, nor of the philosophical form of the evolutionary view of the universe—for which all need go back to Aristotle. Nor need we refer to religious conceptions of development—to such as that of Drummond's attempt to apply the language and conceptions of science to religious experience. In a popular way we all believe in development. Men have *always* believed in some sort of a development. Aristotle's most comprehensive and definitely concrete doctrine of development has had its disciples in all ages.

But speaking of the strict scientific theory of development, we may say that it often passes beyond its legitimate function of a piece of intellectual machinery for classification of facts and their temporal sequences of its abstract world. When it is taken beyond this, as too often it is by the rank and file of scientists, it becomes metaphysical. It is propounded as a causal explanation of the whole concrete experience; sometimes as an actually efficient law or real force that holds everything within its mechanical grip. Thus hypostatizing its abstract conceptions of an abstract phase of the world, it makes gods many, or one almighty force, and gives every possible reason for protest against the dead mechanism it offers us as the actual, concrete world.

The theist may accept the most rigidly mechanical view of evolution as to the chronological sequences of all changes, even in the organic world of life and mind and its institutions. But this theory, when offered as a full and final explanation of concrete reality, is rightly abhorrent to all who hold to the distinctively human and spiritual in experience.

But Mach, and a host of the leaders of science, are protesting against this reification of mere mental machinery, of mathematical models. As Mach says: "Purely mechanical phenomena do not exist. . . . They are abstractions." "The mechanical theory of nature is an artificial conception. The

science of mechanics does not comprise the foundations, no, nor even a part of the world, but only an *aspect* of it."<sup>1</sup> All its concepts, from that of the unseen atom and gemmule up to that of the survival of the fittest, are held as purely mental conceptions for facilitating a short-hand *résumé* or description of an abstract aspect of concrete reality. And the mechanical mythology is classed with animistic religions as fantastic exaggerations of an incomplete perception.<sup>2</sup> As a metaphysical theory, held by the rank and file of scientific men, mechanical evolution is a form of *impersonal pantheism*.

Confined to its legitimate rôle, all must recognize its immense service in the cause of science. We are all evolutionists, in the strict scientific sense of the term. We believe that even its mechanical form should impose itself upon all life and history—or rather upon an abstract phase of all life and history. The more its formula can cover the more we have of that sort of knowledge. It is not against mechanical evolution as such that protests, moral and intellectual, should be made. It is only when the formulæ of a mechanical evolution are held to give us the full explanation of any organic development, that intellectual criticism of its concepts is in order. Let it be limited to merely mechanical conceptions.

Then we must see that pure mechanism can only cover the *quantitative* aspects of reality. But when we come to organic aspects we find *qualitative* changes; something new being born out of the old, for which there are no mechanical equivalents. We must pass out of identity to difference and yet keep a continuity in the higher or more complex forms. That is, we have more than mere quantitative changes, or else we have no real development. Development implies progress, and progress implies change towards an end. Obnoxious as the term is to scientific men, we must insist that not a step forward can be taken without the use of teleology or final cause, *i. e.*, the end

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mach's *Science of Mechanics*, Chap. IV, iv.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 464.



towards which things are developing. Without this conception of an end there can be nothing but change. Without a goal, there can be no progress. And this end, or goal or final cause is not a present sensuous thing.

Topsy grows—becomes more of a girl than she was when in the cradle. For mechanical evolution the problem is how has Topsy now become greater than Topsy then. The solution is merely a question of addition. Topsy now=Topsy then + environment. Or “consider the lillies of the field, how they grow.” Answer, a bulb and environment. The difference then comes from a quantitative external environment. The bigger, brawnier, brainier Topsy is simply a novel, fortuitous readjustment of previous quantitative elements—an *idiosyncrasy*, i. e., a peculiar mingling of already existing elements. For science demands the metaphysical faith that there can never be any increase or diminution of the quantity of matter. Surely, if Topsy’s brain ever became adequate to understand the rigid scientific account of her growth, she would exclaim:

“Am I th’ abandoned orphan of blind chance  
Dropped by wild atoms in disordered dance?”

And yet, that is just the solution, in rigid terms, given by mechanical evolution of the growth of Topsy, and of every other child of man. Even the reason used by the best experts in this line is accounted for in the same mechanical way. And then, too, the doctrine of evolution is itself a mechanical evolution.

Teleology is scorned in science, and yet without teleology there can be no development. What is more, these exponents of evolution cannot describe its processes without using teleological terminology. Of this Darwin himself is a conspicuous example. And Kant, in his *Third Critique*, finds that it is necessary, in organic matter, to use teleology, but only as a *heuristic* principle; serviceable as an inventive analogy, but not of constituent validity. The only design is the hypothesis in the mind of the investigator, which itself was undesigned.

Ever since final causes were damned by Bacon with the phrase, "barren vestals," they have remained eliminated from the methods of science. In fact, whenever we find teleological terminology used in science, we are warned that, though really inconsistent and unmeaning, it is a useful and necessary mode of expression—not to be taken seriously. A chance throw of the twenty-four letters of the alphabet, after millions upon millions of throws, produced the Iliad, and the theory of evolution. Is this a merely frivolous and popular statement of an objection to the mechanical theory, or is it not absolutely *à propos*? Surely "the air of finality" which the exponents of the mechanical theory assume in their theory needs airing, for it is not a barren vestal, but the mother of absolute nihilism as regards all of humanity's cherished ideals.

Let the cold facts of the rigidly scientific doctrine of evolution be boldly and baldly stated, purged of all anthropomorphic conceptions of design, of all ethical and theological embellishments; let it stand out as a theory which has "escorted the Creator to the extreme frontier of the universe, with many expressions of consideration, and returned without Him;" let it be known in its estimate of man's here and hereafter and as unworthing all the spiritual values of humanity; let it not be popularized with meretricious ornament, but let its revolutionary effect upon all that moral and religious men hold dear—then, I cannot see why there should be such suicidal haste to avow one's self to be an evolutionist, on the part of those who believe in God, freedom and immortality. A bullet in the brain, the first tooth pain or first heart strain would seem to be the most natural consequence of holding the mechanical doctrine of evolution as the whole truth of concrete experience.

But this is pragmatic. As we are not following our hearts chiefly, we return to the logic of the theory.

We return again to our assertion that with mere mechanism there can be progress towards a goal, and without a progress towards a goal there can be no development, and, moreover,

that without this ideal goal being an efficient factor, there can be no change from a lower to a higher. One might well go back to Hegel, or if the name repels, back to Aristotle where Hegel went, for a concrete view of development as a world-process and of all processes within the world of time and space that make them to be more than mere mechanical changes. I do not know of a more valuable piece of work to be done to-day than that of a clear, re-statement of Aristotle's theory of development under the rubrics of the *four causes*, and of potentiality, actuality, matter, form, entelechy—of the world of thought and existence in the process up from formless matter towards matterless form. His theory preserves mechanism as subordinate to teleology, and gives full place for the abstract work of science within the concrete work of philosophy. "Back to Aristotle" to-day would mean, for many, forward from a dead mechanism to a living organic process of the evolution of concrete rationality in time and space experience.

In mechanics we have only change. To read development into changes, we must read them teleologically, in the light of final causes. It is only changes which are relative to an end or result that are developing changes. All mechanism itself involves purpose. As Taylor says: "A true machine, so far from being purposeless, is a typical embodiment of purpose." "Not only are all machines, in the end, the product of designing intelligence, but all machines are dependent upon external purposive intelligence for control. . . . There is always somewhere a man to work it."<sup>1</sup> The mechanical is always subordinate to purpose. We form mechanical habits of conduct and make all sorts of labor-saving machines that we may have freedom for larger spontaneous activities.

Logically, this mechanical conception of the universe leads to the conception of a *Deus ex machina*, an extern Deity, otiose but dignified; the maker of so perfectly an automatic machine that it needs no superintendence. At best it leads to a physical

<sup>1</sup> A. E. Taylor, *Elements of Metaphysics*, pp. 236, 237.

pantheism. God is all nature, and all nature is all that God is. All parts of nature are but parts of one stupendous God.

A machine-making God or, a God who is a machine, is the logical goal of mechanical conceptions.

Of course nothing moral or religious is here possible. The word machine grates upon the ear, even in its use in describing human beings. It gives us a cold shudder to have Wordsworth use it in his otherwise perfect little poem to his wife:

"And now I see with eyes serene  
The very pulse of the *machine*."

Aimless changes can never be significant of development. Again in all changes there must be a continuity of *identity*. The new thing, the new self must have a core of identity with the old. Topsy now is the same as Topsy then, or else Topsy never "grow'd." That is, all changes are those of something changing. In mechanics there is always a "*given*" element taken for granted—an atom, a germ, an heredity, an environment. In biology there are "gemmules," "inherent growth forces." "Persistence of type" is as fundamental an element as variations. The latter are mechanically accounted for by changing environment.

But the *given* type or heredity—the identical element must surely itself be accounted for. The mechanical theory accounts for it by previous environments. But environments of what? It is still environments of a *given* something, a definite something that is changed—atom, germ, heredity, the primordial atom, protoplasm, *proto*—something definite. Still the *proto* is a "given" or the regress must be *ad infinitum*. The same is also true of the environment. Back in the abyssmal darkness of chaos, the scientific imagination sees something definite, something already formed—but still evolution must have formed it. Here too we find the superiority of Aristotle's theory of development. He posits two things, as relatively and abstractly distinct—formless matter, or non-being, and matterless form or absolute being. Every relative form of be-

ing is a phase of the superimposition of form upon the formless—the non-existent. We shall shortly return to this in our examination of the category of potentiality.

Abiding by a “given” we must then posit it as moving or being moved. But this lands us at once in Zeno’s unanswerable paradoxes—unanswerable I mean on the empiricist’s theory, except by positing another “given” that moves. Motion implies (a) two places and (b) that the identical thing must be in two places at the same time. Motion implies succession both in time and space. But that which is successive cannot be in the same time, and that which is in two places at the same time cannot be the same thing. Thus motion is inconceivable.

But again, in all development, something identical must become something *different*. In all forms of development the given identical thing is perpetually transcending itself. The given  $x$  must change, or be changed by another “given.” Though it must preserve a certain modicum of identity, there must be *difference* within it when it is changed into  $xy$ . The babe Topsy transcends itself, becomes different and yet remains the same in the woman Topsy. But it is scientific nonsense to say that anything ever transcends itself. No such miracles are allowable. The thing is changed by environment into something else which in turn changes or is changed *ad infinitum*. The quantity of matter or force, however, always remains identical. But then it is *qualitative*, determinate changes that face us in development. It is only in qualitative quantity that we can speak of development. And no amount of mere quantitative changes can give us quality, though Spencer assures us that “by small increments of modifications, any amount of modification may, in time, be generated.” Great, verily, is the power of imperceptible changes! Thus  $x$  becomes  $xy$ ,  $xyz$ ,  $xyz$  etc., and yet it must remain  $x$  or there is no nexus of continuity. If the changes are only those of the addition of external environments, we have no organic process but merely the sum of  $x+y+z$ , only quantitative changes.  $X$  can never transcend its old self to become a new



one. It either remains unchanged by the quantitative addition, and then there is no development, or it becomes a different thing, and then there is no continuity. In the quantitative realm,  $x$  can never transcend itself in a process of self-development. *Imperceptible* external additions are only a scientific mythology. The lower can never change into the higher. "It takes a man to beget a man." It takes a living babe to become a full grown man. It takes form to supervene upon the formless, to make qualitative changes in any quantitative given, in order to a development of it. Development involves not only a present laden with the past, but also a present laden with the future, which is not yet. It involves an ideal end as well as the actual beginning. But empirical mechanism discards the ideal as a dream of the imagination. Thus it fails to see that, though in the order of time a lower form precedes the higher form, yet, from the analysis of its constitutive nature, the form, the ideal, the end must enter as a factor of its development. That is, in the order of real existence, the perfect precedes the imperfect, the whole the part as efficient factors in any process of development. Thus the merely chronological sequences of quantitative changes are impotent to explain development. In any beginning there must not only be a chaos of an "indefinite, incoherent homogeneity," but also the *Logos*, thought, mind, purpose, in order to the evolution of cosmos—or to the evolution of man through the historical lower forms of life. It takes then, let us say boldly, in theological language, a God to beget a man.

With abstract identity and abstract difference there is no process of development. Mechanism can at best say here we have  $x$  and here  $y$  and here we have  $xy$ . It is only as they are both seen to spring from a *ground* that we can find any consequence worth calling an existence. The ground is the concrete unity of identity and difference. The ground, or Leibnitz's category of sufficient reason, is a relative explanation of the process from lower to higher. Its consequences are a self-evolution. Heredity and variations, identity and difference are

held apart as separate external things by the mechanical view, and so no *ground* can be given for development. Empirically one finds *this* and then *that*, but the living link that makes a *this that* or a *somewhat* is lacking. At best there is an internecine struggle for existence, and that which happens to survive is called the fittest—that is, the strongest. But the living link of continuity or development is lost, because these elements are not conceived of as elements of an organic process towards an end. And all that the empirical analysis can give is these elements as separate, external to each other. Hence its attempt to explain organisms by mechanism is always the logically awkward one of putting the cart before the horse. Thus the mechanical analysis of all forms of organism give at best *dijecta membra*. No self-analysis or self-synthesis is allowed and hence no self-development. That is, we have only juxtaposition and addition, no vital synthesis. Life and growth and mental phenomena are not sensuous facts, and hence no stretching of mechanical categories can ever embrace them.

Mechanical evolution now discards the vitalistic and the germinal theories. This latter form of evolution implied a previous involution—emanation a previous immanation. Nothing can be evolved which is not first involved. The botanist then worked with the germ theory. He believed that if he had strong enough microscopes he could see trunk, limb, leaves and fruit inlaid in the microcosmic germ. That is now a discarded superstition for biologists. For the supposed involute was only another hypothetical but imperceptible physical element.

However, we often find them slipping into the same organic view under cover of the term *potential*. The oak is potentially in the acorn, plus a juxtaposed environment. Thus Tyndall saw in matter “the promise and *potency* of all terrestrial life.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>“By an intellectual necessity I cross the boundary of the experimental evidence, and discern in that matter which we, in our ignorance of its *latent* powers and notwithstanding our professed reverence for

Taken seriously, we should have, in this famous confession of faith, a latent *Deus ex machina*. Nature as an *automaton* means self-activity, self-development. But then we are out of and above the realm of passive mechanical changes and far into the realm that philosophy calls reality. "The potency of all terrestrial life" can never be found in any mechanical changes in the *matter* of metaphysical scientists. Faith must invoke a latent deity, when a revealed God is denied. Those who hold the mechanical view of reality, use the term *potential* in either a mythological or realistic form. In its realistic form it is empirical potency. A glass of wine in the stomach of a poet is potential of a poem. It is a mere question of a mechanical transformation of energy.

If we are too advanced to think of going back to Aristotle to learn the function of the *potential* in any form of development, let us go to the *Century Dictionary*. Potence means *power*, efficacy, capacity of producing certain results. The potential is always properly found as an organic correlative of actuality. It may, abstractly, stand for a future actual. What is potentially, is virtually the actual. It is a mere question of time. In physics we have potential energy, a mere positional form, but also a force function, the latent suppressed amount of work-capacity of any system.<sup>1</sup> In no proper use of the term does it ever signify the merely possible.

A mere possibility is as good as nothing. A potential is virtually as good as an actual. A potential thing is indeed itself always some form of the actual. It has a past history and a formed character. But it is called potential only in reference to some other assured future form of actuality. It has a goal, an end, a result—future, but as good as actual. Thus teleology slips in, or rather is seen to be an essential element of potentiality. The potential has a here and now

its Creator, have hitherto covered with opprobrium, the promise and *potency* of all terrestrial life."—Belfast Address, 1874, p. 75.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mach's *Science of Mechanics*, p. 449.

actuality, because it has had a past process. It is to have a there and then form, because it is to have a future history. The acorn is an actuality, but with reference to an actual oak tree, it is potential. According to the mechanical view, the nerve of its future process is the same as that of its past process—one of external causality. For any form of a *given* actuality, as we have seen, is always to be resolved into successive aggregations of environments. But this again eviscerates the potentiality of all potency, and we can only speak of the impotency of the potent, unless we either frankly or surreptitiously bring in the factors of self-activity and final cause or end. The mass of matter which we call an acorn is a potential oak, only so far as, either immanently or transcendently, the *genus* tree, is a factor in the process. Bricks and lumber are potential of a house, but only as the builder and the architect and the plan of a house as a future end or result, enter as factors into the process. The potential abstracted from its organic correlation with these ideal factors is as good as nothing. That is, to make the potential more than a mere capricious possibility, it must be seen to be organically related to a potent, ideal, future end. Abstracted from this, the potential has no “promise and potency” of anything. But here we are back to Aristotle’s *matter and form, potentiality and actuality*, material and final causes. The final cause becomes the first and the efficient cause of the process.

Moreover, to understand the finite processes of potentialities becoming other forms of actuality, there is implied an *Absolute Actual*, a matterless Form—a Form which has *eternally* realized all its potentialities, or which never had any potentialities. The goal, the end is not a future. It is timeless, yet the source of time and space and all movements therein—the Unmoved Mover—a causal actuality because a *Causa Sui*. This actual is always prior to and causal of all finite potentialities, and of their ever rising into higher forms of actuality—all nature being a perpetually graduated conversion of matter into

form of the potential into the actual. But this is shocking nonsense for those who hold the mechanical theory as the ultimate interpretation of nature. We have gone back—nay, let us say, the term potential has forced our thought back, to Aristotle's *Theology*.

A primordial atom is an allowable hypothesis, but a Prime Mover, an *Actus Purus*, a *Causa Sui*, an absolute Self-consciousness—a God—well, the mechanical interpretation of the universe has “no need of that hypothesis.” But without such an hypothesis one cannot intellectually comprehend the rationality of the universe, or of the grades of reality in the physical world, or the progressive development of higher out of lower forms of life. Otherwise we have only a world of changes. But philosophy insists that, in order to a rational comprehension, what is last, that is the end or result, in any chronological process, is really first in the order of real being—that it is from one point of view, the creative form fulfilling empty potentialities, or, from another point of view it is the longing, the desire, the love for the form that is the self-fulfilling potency of the imperfect. In the light of such a First Principle alone can the possibility of development in any form be understood—and in its light we have all nature lifted up out of the dead mechanism of external changes—a process of evolution through the inorganic to the organic and then into all forms of the organic; through the unconscious to consciousness. Here life, self-activity, self-realization of all possible potentialities are possible, because in each potential is a greater than itself. And yet this greater than the empirical self is its own true, higher self, urging, pressing on towards a goal. Time and space are seen to be the cradle and the nursery and the school in which God is training His sons into full manhood—in the organic body of His Eternal Son.

Thus philosophy speaks in identical language with religion, and both speak in terms that are nonsense to those whose only dialect for interpreting the universe is that of the mechanical



theory. Mechanism we still have, and the mechanical theory has still its proper sphere and work. But mechanism is explained as subordinate to teleology, organ to function, the lower to the higher. The contention is not against any of the good work done under the concept of mechanism, but it is only against it when it is urged as an ontological theory to explain the whole of reality. The contention is that all theists should recognize the absolute impossibility of having God, freedom and immortality under such an ontological theory.

Intellectually, as well as morally, one must find in the lowest form of religion a truer interpretation of the world and life, than that offered by the metaphysical mechanical theory—in such a form, for instance, as it is given by Hæckel in his *Riddle of the Universe*.

The contention is, that to understand any change as a *development*, we must use higher categories than those of mechanism. There must be an ἀνάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος.

“The limits of evolution” have been so frequently pointed out and never as yet intellectually disproven, that I need only barely mention a few of them. Professor Howison states the following:<sup>1</sup>

I. The chasm between the phenomenal and the *noumenal*, which is asserted to be, but to be unknowable.

II. The break in the phenomenal world between the inorganic and the organic.

III. The further break between physiological and logical genesis.

IV. The gulf between the Unknowable and the explanatory.

V. The gulf between nature and human nature viewed as essentially reason.

Let not the fairy tales of science, the limitless flights of the imagination of some of the plebifiers of science impose themselves upon us as forms of knowledge. Thankful for every ad-

<sup>1</sup> George H. Howison, *The Limits of Evolution*, Chap. I.

vance of mechanism in giving us useful short-hand, symbolical descriptions of an abstract phase of reality, we are under the intellectual and moral necessity of declining it as an ontological theory. We have no use for a machine that puts on airs, takes the reins and assumes the mastery of the maker. Intellectually such ontological airs of mechanism are ridiculous, morally they are mortal foes. Intellectually, science is *bankrupt* whenever it becomes a pseudo-metaphysic, as it so often does, because science as such cannot honor the drafts drawn upon her ontology by life, teleology, self-activity, self-consciousness, self-determination. And let no one be deceived by any attempted subterfuges oftentimes offered by the lesser lights of science.

It is an unpardonable impertinence for any scientific men to deride metaphysics, and then to bring in a poor metaphysics of their own—a reification of the merely conceptual—to account for the actual. The business of science is not to interpret the concrete whole of experience, but to describe the abstract phenomenal. Mechanism is the best tool for description. Plato said that “even God geometrizes.” Descartes prophesied a universal mathematics as the regnant method. Modern physical science is rapidly realizing this prophecy. As exact science she can tolerate no dissent from her mathematical formulas, which are all on the level with the proposition that two and two make four.

But when we pass from mathematical physics to the reified theories—the metaphysics of some men of science we pass the limits of science. Here the *odium scientificum* becomes as intolerable as the old dead and buried *odium theologicum*. The rubbish chamber of heaven or the limbo of the inferno is not even now wholly occupied by defunct theological forms. We dare believe that some current forms of scientific theory, and all forms of the metaphysics of scientific men—all reification of matter, force, ether, electrons, as the ultimately real—will find their future abode therein.

Science is not bankrupt. Science can never be bankrupt, so

long as she abstains from metaphysics and sticks to her vocation of bringing all sensuous phenomena, under mechanical laws, as short-hand formulas of description of an abstract, external world—abstracted, I mean, from consciousness. For the concrete world is a *known* world. Even the external world can never be known to exist apart from the knower, the “plus me” element in all experience. It is pseudo-science that asserts the external world to exist independently of consciousness, in the same form as it appears for consciousness. It is thus doing what true science abhors. It is making an assertion, which from the nature of the case, it can never possibly prove. Our world is always a *known* world, always the object of a subject. It can never be known apart, because it never exists apart, from a knower.

Though all physics imply and demand a metaphysis, it is not within the scope of science to furnish it. For she deals only with a phenomenal, external world, abstracted from the knower. This is the view of such leaders in science as Mach, Ostwald, Kirchhoff, Helmholtz and Kelvin. They banish metaphysics from their science, and avowedly decline to reify their working conceptions of atoms, mass, force, ether, electrons and laws of nature. Rigid science has nothing to do with final causes, with freedom or with God. Such hypotheses would interfere with her legitimate task. Indeed, science as such has no business whatever with the higher and more concrete forms of reality. That is the business of philosophy and theology and the humanities.

Here two and two make five. Tolstoi said that every prayer is a petition that two and two may make more than four. Sir Oliver Lodge says that “the whole controversy hinges, in one sense, on the efficacy of prayer,” and then goes on to criticise Huxley’s contention against the efficacy of prayer. More things are

“wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of.”

"Even in medicine it is not absurd to suggest that drugs and no prayer may be almost as foolish as prayer and no drugs."<sup>1</sup>

In fact, are we not intellectually compelled to say that the only way in which there can be progress instead of mere quantitative changes; the only way in which there can be any development of the higher out of the lower is by two and two becoming more than four? Here then must be the energizing of an immanent or a transcendent power and intelligence that is more than mass and motion. Mind and matter are always more than two. God and one man are always a majority. And the external world is never without mind or God, and so evolution is possible.

"A fire mist and a planet,  
A crystal and a cell,  
A jelly fish and a Saurian,  
And caves where cave men dwell;  
Then a sense of law and beauty,  
And a face turned from the clod,—  
Some call it evolution,  
And others call it God."

A man is more than the quantitative equivalent of protoplasm or monkey *plus* an infinite quantity of external environments. Mind is *qualitatively* different from matter. There is a difference in *kind* between a stone and a plant. Mechanical changes can only give difference of quantitative aggregations. "A face turned from the clod" can be no evolution from the clod. It is different in *kind*.

Strict science logically precludes the explanation of any non-sensuous forms or elements of concrete experience. It does its proper work when it refrains from expressing any doctrines on these subjects. It is out of its bounds when it attempts to show that its principles and results lead to any form of Theism or morality. It transgresses its limits much more when it assumes the rôle of metaphysics, as it does when it takes its phenomena and their laws of succession and coexistence as real realities

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Ideals of Science and Faith*, Chap. I.

and their constitutive relations. When it does this, when it reifies its abstractions of atoms, matter, force, cause, it gives us a metaphysics which absolutely precludes all forms of freedom and spirituality. But in doing this it is no longer science, but the poor metaphysics of a pseudo-science.

We demur, then, to physical science having the last word to say in man's interpretation of experience. We do so because (a) its categories are applied to an abstract phase of experience for the practical purpose of dealing successfully with this portion, (b) because of the limitations and self-contradictions of the categories of thought used by mechanical science, when otherwise applied. The mechanical theory gives a measured mechanical description of external phenomena in terms of mass and motion, which by no means exhaust all phases of even this abstract world.

Again we demur to the attempt to make the interpretation of concrete experience given by physical science to be knowledge, in the strict sense of the term, while other interpretations are placed outside of the realm of knowledge. It is a technical and historical blunder to identify the term *science* with merely physical science. At least, it is to be said, that all interpretations of experience—scientific, ethical and religious—are on a par as to validity, though not on a par as to relative concreteness of interpretation.

And now, after this wearisome and semi-technical examination of the meaning and use and limitations of the categories with which mechanistic science works, in contrast with the higher and more concrete categories of philosophy, we return to a consideration of the limitations of the historical method, in its scientific form. The ardent exponents of this method now claim that it dominates in the study of all things—not only in history proper, but in everything that has a past with successive stages. And everything in time has such a part. The theory of evolution claims to be a history of all things up to date. It is thus a form of the historical method. But the proper field of



this method is that of human history and the social institutions of man. This method does its *proper* work in making a minute and exhaustive inventory of the antecedent, concomitant and subsequent stages in the temporal process of any institution. It furnishes the data for their rational explanation. The work done by the exponents of this method has been enormous, marvelously painstaking and accurate and in every way admirable. They have attempted to reproduce the events of a past phase of human activity—to give an exact narrative of the complex facts of the time—to make the past veritably a present to us. They have ransacked libraries of books and all sorts of documentary and archæological evidence. When doing its proper work this method avoids all ideological, didactic and ethical preconceptions. It seeks only for facts, rather than an interpretation, though it often has forgotten that facts themselves are but fossilized interpretations. It seeks the historical origin of institutions, the chronological stages of their formation. It holds that none of them—laws, constitutions, religions—ever come full-made to man. They all have a history. What then are the facts of their history?

Pages of rhetoric would not suffice to tell of the vast and disinterested labor done by its exponents, or of the immense increase of knowledge of the past of present institutions in the myriad forms of anthropology. No other body of workers in science has done more or done it better than the students of history.

It is only when this method is also used as the ultimate method of the explanation of a present by its past, making its natural history to be its full and true history, that we find its limitations. When used as an *explanatory* method we find that it generally uses the categories of physical science. That is, it uses the category of empirical causality and banishes that of teleology. Too often, too, it uses causality, not in the positivistic sense of sequence and coexistence, to which it has been reduced in science, but in its earlier *animistic* sense of force or

external compulsion. Logically, all it can say is, now we have *A*, with *a*, *b*, *c*—*z* as environment, and then we have *B*. But, too often, it regards *B* as caused by *A*+*a*, *b*, *c*—*z*. Thus it seeks to explain the *status quo* of any institution in the light of its past changes, making them the *efficient* causes of its present form. But, as we have seen, efficient causality must either be eviscerated of all efficiency or else be made to include a first and final cause.

This method rightly asks for *the that* (ὅτι), but wrongly proceeds to make the *that* (ὅτι) equivalent to the *why* (διότι) though here, strangely enough, it is following the etymological derivation of ὅτι — διὰ τοῦτο ὅ τι. But, logically, the *why* is a different category from the *how*. The *why* is the reason, the cause the τὸ οὖν ἕνεκα, which is always the end, or final cause. It forgets its Aristotle—that the true nature of anything is not to be found in its potential or immature material form, but in its fully realized form or its ἐντελέχεια. Thus the true nature of the acorn is only to be seen in its realized form of an oak—that of the new-born babe in its form of manhood.

Thus the historical method comes to look too exclusively backward rather than forward and upward, in its explanation of any development. At best it gets to the category of reciprocity—of thing and environment, both of which are only accidentally and externally related to each other. Mere juxtaposition becomes the efficient cause. It fails to remember that its analysis of the *given thing* is always resolvable into previous juxtapositions. It fails, too, to see that it always presupposes some form of self-activity—that at least thing and environment are organically connected in the process. But again, while illogically using the semi-organic form of reciprocity, it fails to see that organic development implies besides, self-activity and a future as well as a past. For any organism, as an organism, is not in space at all.

In an organism, each part, or rather, each function, is both means and end. It is a system or unity made up, not of me-

chanical, but of coöperative functions. Each lives for the others and the whole. The whole lives in and for each part.

The living plant or animal—its organic life growth is an invisible, intangible something that can in no way be seen, or seen to be the result of any external thing. Food in the stomach is transmuted, not by mechanical or chemical processes, though both of these go on in the stomach.

Given the cells, still an organism is not merely a mechanical aggregation of cells, and yet no mechanical science can find the causal linkage uniting them into one system. In the lowest form of vital organism there is a coöperation of organs that is quasi-purposive, that unites them into one in a way absolutely different from the way in which parts of a machine are united. In the machine, the purposive coöperation of the parts is entirely external—that is, in the mind of the maker of it. In an organism the matter changes, but the life preserves its identity. In a machine this is not so. Part after part may be replaced till the whole identity is gone. An old stocking may be darned and darned till not a fibre of the old stocking remains, but then it is *another* stocking. In a body, every material particle may be other than it was a few years before and yet the life keep its identity.

An organism is never simply the sum of its external parts. Its parts are never merely external parts. They are members of an organic system, which realizes itself in its members. As Aristotle put it, a hand dissevered from a living body is no longer a hand. The life of the body of man, or of any of his institutions, is not a sensuous form of existence. It is always more than the mechanical aggregate of its sensuous conditions—past and present. There is something in all organisms and their self-active development that no sense nor sense-extending scopes can ever see—something that no mere past of external factors can ever explain. "There is a mystery," not only "in the soul of state," but in the life of every human institution, that is beyond the ken of the keenest scopes of physical science.

An organism is always an organism of organs, functions that have no sensuous existence. A development is always an organic process of realizing at one stage, what was not present at a relatively initial stage. It is always an ideal continuity of a being forever devouring its own present, in creating its own future. Science is hopelessly bankrupt, when she passed out her mechanical paper money to honor the checks drawn upon her for life, organisms, development and self-realization in any form. We insist that no mere past can account for the present of any organism; that for the efficient pulse of any development we must look to the ideal end—the future that has as yet no sensuous existence—gradually realizing itself through the means of external circumstances; that in any developing form there is immanent a greater than it—an unactualized ideal that is the potency of its future form.

The neglect of this ideal and, empirially, future element, hopelessly invalidates any mechanical explanation of historical development. This enforcement of the forceless category of causality to the neglect of that of teleology vitiates too often much of the work of the historical method when used as a method of explanation. Fortunately, logical consistency is often neglected, and we have theories of society and social institutions, professedly based on mechanical view, so well embellished with teleological and ethical terminology as to conceal their real principle, sometimes even from the writers themselves. But never can any form of mechanical explanation give other than a stone for bread. When offered to theists a homely proverb is a sufficient criticism: "A china egg may fool even a hen, but it won't make a good omelet."

## II. THE PHILOSOPHICAL FORM OF THE HISTORICAL METHOD.

Our criticism of the empirical or scientific school of the historical method has already developed its philosophical form.

Here too, as we have already seen, the conception of *development* is a regnant principle. The physical development has seen to be logically possible, only on condition of the meta-physical principle of *Mind* and the category of Final Cause.

Everything that grows or develops is as full of the future as it is laden with the past. For anything to transcend its present sensuous form, there must be a factor that is *spatially and temporally unreal*, immanent within it, whether unconsciously as in the unorganic, or sub-consciously as in the plant, or consciously as in man. It is to this, the ideal, the future, the end that has no actuality, as an environment, that we must look to for the use and control of mechanical processes, making them into agents and ministers of organic processes. Every developing process, could it be conscious and utter its experience, would say, "in me lives a greater than me." The acorn has the *generic* ideal within it—not sensuously and yet really—and its growth is relatively a self-realization of its *genus*. At best it is a co-worker with this potent non-physical generic factor in the process of its development. So when any method explains the present form of a human institution by the aggregate of its past antecedents and environments we demur—*non demonstrandum est*. Consciousness, though chronologically later in its appearance on earth than the unconscious, cannot have been merely a product of the unconscious. In fact all the categories used for the interpretation of experience are found only in that of self-consciousness. They are its grips, or hands, or keys to bring order out of chaos. To put it in a well worn phrase, the source of the categories can never be made subject to its own categories. It is always transcendental, standing apart from, while efficiently immanent within, the historically processes, and, later, interpretative of these processes.

Whence this ideal element in plant, animal and man? Whence, in particular, the animating compulsory ideals that we find in any analysis of human institutions? Only through an ideal of a *better* condition has there been a progress out of a



lower one. Only through the ideal of *the Best* have there been ideals of a better. Not backwards through aggregations of lower forms; nor backward to the primordial atom, must the eye be cast in explaining the history of man's achievement since his struggle out of lower forms of life. No mere past, no mere chronological succession of past empirical states can account for these ideals of a better and a Best, except so far as those states are seen to implicate the empirically self-transcending element. Put the philosophical answer in theological form, and we say they are only accountable for by the conception of *God in history*—present, not wholly immanently—else nature would be God—nor wholly transcendently or externally else nature would have no self-activity or worth. As Aristotle would say, the world has its vital principle or ultimate and concomitant origin in God, and this principle exists not merely as a form immanent in the world, like the order in an army, but also as an absolute self-existent substance, like the general of an army. Thus the ultimate presupposition of *intelligent will* must always be the *plus* element of any lower stage, in order to an advance to a higher stage. For the development of consciousness out of the unconscious, of the moral out of the non-moral, of the highest forms of ethical institutions out of the brute struggle for existence—in every form of development there is an intellectual “need of this hypothesis.” The *prins* of all activity as well as of all thought is that of perfect Self-consciousness, self-activity, the *Actus Purus* of the scholastics, the Prime Mover or Self-consciousness of Aristotle, the Good of Plato, the God of Christians—all of which is arrant nonsense to mechanical metaphysics. This timeless *prior* is the intellectually necessary presupposition in all development; necessary not only to its changes, but also necessary as a standard by which alone we can say that any change is either intellectually or morally a progress rather than a lapse. And yet this is just the hypothesis of which mechanical science and the science of history “have no need.” Take away the semi-popular but mere-

tricious embellishments of many natural histories of man's ethical, political and religious institutions and you will find, as their principle, that of a mechanism in which the hypothesis of God, freedom and immortality are absolutely ruled out. There should be no mistake about this. What is needed is strenuous criticism of their fundamental principle as an insufficient First Principle.

If in the beginning there was only a mass of heterogenous homogenousness, there must have been either an immanent or a transcendent element of self-activity, towards self-realization in the form that modern civilization now bears. The leaden, slimy past, without this ideal future of any human institution is just as much "a past that never was a present," as any mythical "golden age." This *plus* element must be added to any forest of monkeys to get the Edenic garden of the present. The Christian institution of marriage, though historically traceable to lowly forms of animal promiscuity, can be seen to be an evolution from these lowly forms, only in the light of this *plus* element. Conscience and morality, though traceable to lower forms of conduct, and this conduct to mechanical forms of motion, (Spencer) need this *plus* element as constitutive of the upward movement. We cannot do, as Spencer insists that we must, "interpret the more developed by the less developed." No mere "aggregations of simple excitations or compounding of simple presentative feelings" can account for "the *relations* between feelings," or for the rise of intelligence and purpose.<sup>1</sup> We may grant all the chronological steps which Spencer traces in the evolution of moral conduct, and yet, without this *plus* element, we have only a series of changes. In a real sense then, the perfect does precede the imperfect. Though, chronologically, its empirical form is always a future, it is actually present as formative and generic in the process. Thus no merely mechanical chronological series, "simple" or "compound" or "re-compounded" can account for the existence of any form of morality

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Spencer's *Data of Ethics*, Chaps, V, VI, VII.

or of the moralizing institutions of family, state and church.

"They reckon ill who leave me out."

It is in this *plus* element that we find not merely the only sufficient spring of development, but also the real ontological element that accounts for the chronological evolution of the higher out of the lower. The Final Cause is the light in which we can understand those human ideals that have ever urged man upward. Only in its light can we make the judgment on any transformation, that it is an improvement—a progress, a development. In the blind, unconscious struggle of pre-human nature; in the struggles for existence and for better forms of existence there is always this attractive Final Cause operative, and its efficiency in any change is the measure of its reality.<sup>1</sup>

*Respice finem* has been the immanent potency in plant, animal and man, in all their upward movements. Teleology is regnant at least in the sphere of the truly human. The ideal method of science is anti-teleological. And the historical method inclines to the same mechanical view in its interpreting the present by its past external history. It is only a source of intellectual confusion for the idealistic view to coquet with the empirical view. If it is nonsense to explain a mountain in terms of morals, it is no less nonsense to explain morals and the moral institutions of man in terms used to explain the mountain. All the past external elements of an institution do not explain it. It is always more than the sum of external parts, as is every organism. To say that there was at a relatively first time, or time of origins, or, to use Spencer's formula, "an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity, passing to a definite coherent heterogeneity" may possibly be an abstract descriptive formula of chronological stages of sensuous existence. It is only to say first we have  $x$ , then  $x^1$ ,  $x^2$ — $x^n$ . It is no

<sup>1</sup>This is Aristotle's conception of the unmoved Mover which moves, which acts upon the world as the primary object of desire: *Κινεῖ ὡς ἐρωμένον*.

explanation, causal or teleological. Besides the adjectives used in the formula qualify the nouns out of all substantial meaning. An *indefinite, incoherent* homogeneity is an unthinkable homogeneity. Spencer's formula is *abracadabra*, unless we interpret the adjectives as the thought element and the nouns as the matter element. And then, the religious interpretation of the world-process given in the first chapter of Genesis and the first chapter of St. John's Gospel, interpret the process much more intelligibly.

It is the boast of the historical school that this method has forever exploded the credibility of a golden age in the past; of innate moral or intellectual ideas in the mind; of natural rights in the state; of a supernatural revelation in religion—in a word, of a higher form preceding a lower form. It has refuted the lapse theory in general.

We admit this. We accept the chronological sequences that a patient minute historical investigation finds in any field of inquiry. We admit that the golden age is historically a fiction; that the Garden of Eden was probably a forest of monkeys, and that long prior to that, chronologically, there was protoplasm, then *proto-slime* and then *proto-nothing*, but an indefinite, incoherent infinity of homogeneousness. No theist need hesitate to accept clearly proven chronological data, or the evolutionary theory as a short-hand descriptive formula of the chronological sequences of an abstract portion of reality as mere sense data are. But to accept this as an ontological explanation is beyond the capacity of any intellect that knows that two and two never make five, even though the chronological antecedents carry us back to times before man had any conception of abstract numbers, and before the evolution theory was evolved.

As the mechanical chronological past series of changes cannot account for any development, neither can it afford any standard by which we can measure any change so as to make the judgment that it is an evolution, a development, a progress. And when we come to measure the progress and the worth of

any existing institution, we necessarily imply a standard, or end, or ideal.

But it is one of the natural and almost inevitable vices of any empirical method, that in seeking to explain the higher by the lower, it lowers the real worth of the higher form. Professor Dicey puts it very mildly when he says: "The possible weakness of the historical method as applied to the growth of institutions is, that it may induce men to think so much of the way in which an institution has come to be what it is, that they cease to consider with sufficient care *what* it is that an institution has *become*."<sup>1</sup> Mankind comes to be humiliated in view of its very humble origin.

These exploiters of the lowly empirical origin of man and his institutions might quote these words of the prophet Isaiah: "Look unto the rock whence ye were hewn and the hole of the pit whence ye were dug." (Isaiah LI, 1.). But in quoting, they would pervert his meaning. The prophet is exhorting the righteous to look back to their noble ancestors, as an inspiration. They ought to be some persons of account, because of their lineage from persons of account. But when the pit whence man was digged is that of lowly, brutish form; and when the mind is assiduously studying those forms, the estimate of what man and his institutions are take on a different estimate. There is indeed a just prejudice felt by man when told to look to such a pit for inspiration—against the derivation of man from beast, Christianity from Judaism and Judaism from lower forms and finally all religion from that of the fear of ghosts (Spencer); of psychology from physiology and that from physics and that from matter, motion and space as the ultimate elements of the real. "Go to the ant thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise" (Proverbs VI, 6) are words of practical wisdom. But go to the ape thou man, consider his ways, to understand what thou art, is neither intellectual nor practical wisdom. Much wiser would it be to say to the ape, go to the man thou beast; consider

<sup>1</sup> Dicey, *The Law of the Constitution*, pref. to 1st ed.



his ways and be wise as to thy future goal. The actual ape, as potential man, might thus learn something that would aid his progress into actual manhood. This conscious ideal in the apes would hasten the process, going on through the persuasion of the unconscious ideal, of this rising "on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things." If not, then how can the man learn anything about his own essential form from the study of the ape. As a matter of fact, anthropologists always interpret the lower in the light of the higher; the ape in the light of their knowledge of man. Their observation of the ape's characteristics are interpretations from the human standpoint. Often they anthropomorphize too much in attributing special cleverness to animals, and, anon, they de-anthropomorphize or animalize too much in their study of man.

As a matter of fact, however, they do—and cannot do otherwise than—reverse Spencer's rule to "interpret the more developed by the less developed." The student of the ape, not being an ape, knows more about the ape than the ape himself, simply because he knows more of the developed form of the ape, as found in man. He looks at the ape's potentialities in the light of their actualization in man. With a clear apprehension of the functions in the higher form, he can see the imperfection in other forms, which make them lower. He understands a part by his understanding the whole—an elementary or lower stage by his knowledge of the developed stage. And the same is true of the historical method as applied to the various chronologically successive stages of any human institution, intellectual or practical. Jurisprudence to-day is comparative jurisprudence—an interpretation of diverse past and lower forms in the light of its most developed form. Politics is comparative politics—an interpretation of many past forms in the light of its modern form. Philology is comparative philology. The science of all arts and institutions is comparative, and the more developed serves to explain how other forms are less developed. And then alas! for Spencer's formula, even the more developed is explained in com-

parison with an ideal that, as yet, has no actual time and space existence. The goal may fly and forever fly, but some relative idea of the goal is always a chief factor in the explanation of how some form is relatively more elementary and undeveloped than another. Some ideal of the normal is present in all study of the abnormal. Some actual straight line or perfect circle, or absolutely frictionless mass, or perfect vacuum—or, since these are confessedly never actual—some ideal of them is present in the mind of the student who studies their actual forms. No better illustration of how we can understand the imperfect in the light of an ideal perfect can be given than the method that Spencer follows in his chapter on "Absolute and Relative Ethics."<sup>1</sup> Here he does *not* follow his formula of explaining the higher by the lower. He formulates the ideal of a straight man in a straight community; the ideal of a completely evolved man in a completely evolved society, "to serve as a standard for our guidance in solving, as well as we can, the problems of real conduct."

It is too often more than the implied judgment, that if man was derived from such lowly forms, then his own form is not so very high. The study of the lowly earlier forms of his best institutions, has at least a depressing effect upon the estimation of their present validity and worth. Professor Sidgwick in speaking of the sceptical effect of tracing the historical growth of beliefs is inclined to deny that it has any *logical* justification. He attributes it to the psychological effect of the concentration of the mind upon the vast and bewildering stages of their development and maintains, *e. g.*, that so far as ethics is concerned, the ascertainment of the origin and development of moral ideas cannot, *logically*, have any such *general* effect in destroying our confidence in our present moral ideals.<sup>2</sup>

But this effect *is logical*, in any merely empirical, historical view. Monkey and protoplasm are not more lowly forms than

<sup>1</sup> *Data of Ethics*, Chap. XV.

<sup>2</sup> *Philosophy, Its Scope and Relations*, pp. 163-164.

"the dust of the ground" out of which it is said that the Lord God formed man." (Gen. II, 7). But, there, it is added that the Lord "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul." We may accept, as most of us do, the evolutionary account of the origin of man out of lower forms of life, but always with the *plus* element of an immanent or transcendent Perfect. If in the dust, or protoplasm or gibbering monkey, there was a greater than the empirical dust, protoplasm or monkey, then the genesis of man out of and above them, becomes intelligible and validates the worth of the evolved man. Otherwise such an evolution does *logically* invalidate our estimation of man and his place in nature. Moreover such merely empirical origin of man's beliefs and institutions; of his categories of thought and of his doctrine of evolution itself, invalidates his estimate of their validity. For, ontologically, it is held that the sum total of empirical reality, be it matter or force, is an unchanging quantity, and that all we have are mechanical integrations and disintegrations of this one matter or force. Under this view man is at least less than the Son of God. If it does not "take at least a man to beget a man," much less does it take a God.

But really the merely empirical antecedents of man, his manners, morals and moralizing institutions of family, state and church is no valid measure of their worth. They are what they have become and do what they do, because of the implicit impulse to rationality, which is more explicit or developed than in earlier elementary forms. But *logically* we *cannot* make this judgment without the assumption of the *plus* element. Logically one is bound either to assume the miracle of the evolution of higher out of lower forms, or to doubt the applicability of the terms higher and better to any forms. In fact we often find these two incongenial forms of judgment and mood strangely and illogically blended in the minds of students of the historical past of any creed or institution. Faith in the supersession of all other methods of studying human institutions by the historical method, the

consummate method of consummated man to date, and forever hereafter—faith in this method as a progressive development out of antiquated methods, and faith in progress generally, is often combined with sceptical views as to the validity and worth of even the present. Depreciators of the past, they are at one moment appreciators of the present as the real golden age. The spirit of the *Aufklärung* is upon them. With the unhistorical “age of reason,” they believe that the present reason of historical students is the ultimate standard of adjudication of all institutions; that the rational is finally to be found in the reason of the intellectually *élite* students of history. Weighed in the balance, the past of all institutions is found imperfect. And then, in the same spirit of the *Enlightenment*, the present form of all developed institutions is found to be of little worth. The cold, sceptical cynicism of the enlightenment is turned upon present institutions and the *Aufklärung*, the rationalism of the “unhistorical eighteenth century,” becomes an *Ausklärung*—an *out-clearing*, not only of the unworthy past but of the unworthy present.

Professor Sidgwick has aptly and logically classified these two heterogenous judgments—*moods*, I would rather say—of the exponents of the historical method as those of “relativity” and “progressivism,” or the *destructive* and the *constructive* judgments of the historical method.<sup>1</sup> But he errs in making the *destructive* judgment illogical. For the whole of empiricism moves in the sphere of the relative, and that too of relatives that are relative to nothing other and higher than themselves. Without ideals and a final cause, there is only change.

Thing and environment, cause and effect, are all relatives—mere juxtapositions which may be changed the next moment—all are mere appearances which appear only to disappear. The disappearance of reality, in present as well as in past forms, becomes the theme. Here relativity attacks “the unique quality

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy, Its Scope and Relations*, p. 162.

of being true, which we attribute to the opinions of our own time." The imperfection and falsity of earlier forms of creed and deed cannot, without a miracle, be absent from their present forms. The lower cannot beget the higher. There is no higher: all are low. Burns's line—

"A man's a man for a' that,"

becomes "*For a' that*," for his ascent from lower form, not his descent from God—he is not a man. "For a' that" of the past of any institution, it is not a valid present institution. The present is relative to the "a' that" of the past, and both are only relative transformations of an identical imperfect. A lie resting upon a lie in the past, cannot lead to anything but a lie in its present or future form. The indefinite regress into past imperfection cannot lead to a definite progress into present perfection. No product can be separated from its process, and the product itself is in a process. Process and product are alike relative. The historical method, devoted primarily to the process, merges the product into the process. Terms dependent on relatives are themselves only relative terminals, and here we find no *similia similibus* for a cure. Everything is relative and fallible. Our judgment itself is relative and fallible. So evolution may be a devolution, and we become detractors of the present. Knowledge itself is relative—relative to the knower and to the known; and the known is relative—relative to the knower and itself a lot of relations. Evolution is relative; the historical method is relative, and all relatives abstracted from an organic system can never be other than abstract, relative—untrue. In such a stage of thought, authority for judgments of truth and validity is nowhere, and the liberty of license everywhere—no truth and hence no real freedom.

Thus one mood of the historical method is intellectually, to sit apart, beholding all forms of creeds and deeds, while holding none, and practically to cease to urge men onward, as they are without the slightest idea of the goal, and finally to cease to

"Scorn delights and live laborious days,"



in order "to pass from the relative truth of the nineteenth, to the relative truth of the twentieth century, supposing the latter to be not a jot more true, or less merely relative than the former."

Hegel, in speaking of those who follow the historical method in the study of dogmas, says that they are "like clerks of some mercantile house, who keep account only of somebody else's wealth without having any property of their own. It is true they receive a salary, but their chief function is to record the wealth of others. . . . They occupy themselves with truths that *were* truths for others. They know as little of the inner truth as a blind man does of a painting, even though he handles the frame. They know only how a certain dogma was established by this or that council, what reasons the framers of it advanced and how one or the other came to predominate. . . . Much is told us of the history of the painter of the picture and of the fate of the picture itself, what price it had at different times, into what hands it came, but we are never permitted to see anything of the picture itself."<sup>1</sup> But the picture—"The play's the thing" to catch the heart and conscience of true students of history. When the *divine drama* is not seen within the panorama of changing and relative scenes of history, our truly human interest must flag. We must get beyond the sphere of the relative; get at the Hamlet of the play; get at the central, self-relating principles that make mere relatives to be significant, because seen to be relatives in an organic system.

Indeed we must pass beyond the conception of relativity, in order to pronounce any stage of the process to be merely relative. There must be self-relation, system as a standard of judgment.

Before passing to the consideration of the judgment of *Progress*, we may note another curiously topsy-turvy form of judgment, that the use of the strictly historical method sometimes develops. Instead of depreciating the present rather than the past forms of institutions, we find such noted historical students as Professors Edwin Hatch, and A. Harnack, patiently

<sup>1</sup> Hegel's *Philosophy of Religion*, I, 41.

and successfully tracing the development of historical Christianity through nineteen centuries. They find the development of Christian polity, creed and ritual to have been a colossal blunder. But they believe in a golden past, a pure, primitive undeveloped form—an *essence* of Christianity, of which all developed forms are degenerations—an evolution that is a devolution. They take us back and picture the empirical present of the life and times of a pious Jewish peasant, who wrote no book, developed no theology and established no definite institution. From this, as from a germ and successive hostile environments, it developed, or rather degenerated, into the mighty and broad forms of the Christian Church. But the development has been only a smothering of the essence. There has been no God in history, at least in the development of historical Christianity.<sup>1</sup> It has been a development of the *husk* to the smothering of the kernel of Christianity. This is only another form of the pessimism so often sequent upon the use of the historical method.

The relativity of the relative, gives, as we have seen, at least suspense of judgment as to any historical process being true or false, good or bad. This is the *logic* of relativity. But when relativity is thought out; when its inherent contradictions are made explicit, we are logically forced to the standpoint of self-relation, system, an organic whole, of which the relative parts are organic members. This organism may be a state or church, or humanity; or it may be *That* in which all social organisms live and move and have their being, without its being simply the total of them all. It is, in a word, the *plus* element of all empirical origins and histories, in the light of which alone we can see the significance of any organ, or its progressive improvement in its function as an organ. Professor Sidgwick, while holding that the historical method logically leads to the judgment of progress in the sociological sphere, denies that its lack of teleology precludes its being the final adjudicator in the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chap. II.

matter. In fact, his praise of the judgment of progress is very faint: "The one important lesson the method teaches us being the vague lesson of patience and hope."<sup>1</sup>

With this he hands the question over from the "consensus of experts," to philosophy, or rather to ethics. Here again we find the weakness of his logic. It does not lead him to the "one far-off Divine event to which the whole creation moves. It leads him only to moral teleology. His ultimate postulate is that of a "*Moral order*." Here he halts and declines to have the mind make its ascent to God. He believes that we may hold to a Moral order as ultimate, without the further postulate of a *Moral Orderer*. "We may believe in Moral order—the power not ourselves that makes for righteousness" (Matthew Arnold's well-worn formula) without connecting it with Personality."<sup>2</sup> But here we are concerned not with Professor Sidgwick's views, but with the logic of the judgment of progress under the historical method. It may be said in passing, that both chronologically, and from the empirical standpoint, logically, his placing *Relativism* before *Progressivism* is a *mis*-placement. Historically, the optimistic view of history came first. It was the child of Romanticism and of the idealistic philosophy of the nineteenth century. Lessing and Herder were inspired by the *genetic* method of studying history. And "genetic" is the explanatory term applied to the historical method by its exponents. Gradual growth of the higher from lower forms of man's institutions through an immanent element of self-realization led back to a *historical* renaissance. Hegel gave the idealist impulse to the method that almost founded and largely dominated the historical school for a generation.<sup>3</sup> The eternally human was al-

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy, Its Scope and Relations*, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* pp. 243-4.

<sup>3</sup> Professor Sidgwick, a conspicuous exponent of the historical method and hostile to absolute Idealism, says that "the present predominance of the historical method is largely due to Hegel." Sidgwick's *History of Ethics*, p. 268.

most divinized by the Romanticists, who sought to trace its progressive development or education in and through history. Hegel gave the logic of the method and stimulated the concrete study of history—far as this was removed from his own special speculative work.

What is the meaning and order of the successive changing forms—in the history of any institution, of mankind itself? What part of “the vision of splendid” has any age or people caught and partially embodied in its institutions? The historical sense had its origin in this romantic and idealistic view of the world—or rather of humanity.

At this stage of the method, there was no question as to progress; the gradual evolution of the involved generic nature of humanity. Every form of every human institution was looked upon as a degree of the actualization of the potential perfection of humanity, and as having its progressive degree of worth and validity. But later on the school fell under the dominance of the concepts of physical science. Thenceforward, the boast of progress becomes more feeble and, whenever uttered, illogical. Psychologically, also, the progress-judgment is prior. The enthusiasm for the historical method is primarily optimistic. The historical sense uses the historical method to see the meaning and worth of any stage, and how it developed into forms of higher meaning and worth. Sincere and earnest and indefatigable pursuit of truth—the noble devotion to the study of insignificant details, is primarily aroused and inspired by the belief that the significance and worth of any epoch or institution can best be seen and explained by the results of such a method. This, we have seen, was the mood of the earlier exponents of this method. The pessimistic mood in later scholars may be traced not only to academical weariness, but it is the *logical* result of such studies pursued under the conception of relativity.

In fact, the pessimistic mood is logically reinforced by every form of empirical science that assumes the rôle of a metaphysis. Pessimism of the individual is logical, on the ground of every metaphysic that does not sustain the immeasurable value of the individual—the Christian as well as the modern estimate of the place and worth of the individual—by making the individual an organic member of an infinite and absolute system. For abstract individualism, neither science nor ethics, nor sociology, nor philosophy have any place. But for the concrete individual—for the infinite worth of the individual that is not an abstract finite separate self—for the individual as Christianity contemplates him as an organic member of the Kingdom of God, who ruleth over and in all, there is no place found by science in any of its empirical forms, masquerading as a sufficient explanation of the whole concrete of experience. To put this technically, it is because all forms of science—from mathematical physics to the historical view, move in the realm of relativity. They use the categories of the relative and not that of the self-related. And it is only in the organic sphere of the free, the self-related, that there can be found a valid ground for the infinite worth of the finite individual, and for the hope that, *logically*, banishes pessimism. To be without God is, logically, to be without hope, without any justification for the modern and Christian judgment of value of the individual. That is, the individual who cannot realize his identity, his organic unity with the supreme principle of the universe as good and true, can have but a temporary and foolish optimism as to his own high worth and destiny.

(a) Modern science, when it assumes an ontological rôle, certainly destroys all logical grounds for the modern conception of the place and worth of the individual. Physical science in this rôle is an impersonal physical pantheism.

(b) Again, in the moral institutions of humanity, as explained by the historical school, though the individual gets a place and a filling, the logical judgment must be pessimistic.



In the family, in the state, in all institutions of human culture, the individual becomes relatively concrete and developed. But, then, humanity in all its educational and moralizing forms is itself merely relative. It is not complete, independent, *Causa sui*. It is relative to an *other* that it is not itself. Taken in its highest ethical and altruistic form, the religion of humanity, of positivism, it is still in the realm of finitude and relativity, and cannot guarantee the infinite worth and destiny of the individual or of the whole organism of humanity itself. There can be no worship of the finite and relative, however large and long-lived that finite may be. Nor can any multi-magnified, poly-million age enduring organism guarantee any everlasting life.

The finite—physical and ethical—bulk it as large as imagination can picture—is always relative and dependent. There is always an *other*, an environment that bounds and limits it, so that it can have no true independence and no real efficient or final causality, till it is seen to be organically connected with a higher, spiritual environment. Not till its finitude and dependency can be seen to be that of a member of the total system of the Absolute—not till it can be seen to be potentially identical in principle with the Absolute, has it any guarantee of its own worth and destiny. It is one of the demonstrations of philosophy, as it has ever been one of the realized faiths of religion, that “the finite, is capable of the infinite”—not, indeed, as an abstract finite, but as a finite in organic relation with the infinite, or as a member through which pulsates the life of the whole. To make the *other*, that which humanity finds other and opposed to itself, to be a physical universe, may give a world of physical and moral struggle of existence, but till that “*other*” is seen to be God, struggle and not victory is the only possible judgment. To make the whole known and knowable of experience, to have as its limiting “*other*” the Unknowable, kith and kinship with which, being an unwarranted assumption, as Spencer does, is to create a dualism that negates independence.

One may safely challenge any form of empiricism for a

justification of the judgments of progress and optimism. And one may safely, without any danger of refutation, challenge any form of science that assumes to be a sufficient and final explanation of experience, to deny the charge that it has no place for God, freedom and immortality. It is simply and absolutely impossible for it to do so logically, because the categories with which it works are those of the finite, the relative, the dependent. It is not till we criticise these categories into the ultimate one of Self-Consciousness; till we see these categories of quantity and relations criticise themselves into the category of the self-related—the independent, the total system, as mind or spirit, that we can have any full rational explanation, of either physical nature or of humanity's whence, where and whither. Scientific men are justly and logically agnostic, from the viewpoint of science. Science, as science, has no need of the hypothesis of the ideals of humanity, however much men of science may and do have them. But they have them when they recognize the limits of science, and also allow thought to have its perfect work and full fruition in the absolute objectivity of spirit, as the genesis and goal of the whole process of the physical universe.

Theists may and must accept all the demonstrated results of mechanical science and of the historical method, and scientific men may and must accept all the fundamental principles of religion and philosophy, *i. e.*, whenever they think the thing through, or see the self-criticism of the lower categories into the ultimate one of Self-consciousness.

Finally we may say that the dialectic of thought forces us from the categories of physical science and of the historical method to the ultimate one of thought—that is—well, let us put it frankly—to God—from, through and to Whom are all things finite, and in Whom they all find their function and worth. That, and not matter, force, ether, electricity, or any more refined form of the ultimate world-stuff is the only sufficient First Principle of an ontological explanation of all phases of the proc-

ess of the finite. Than self-consciousness or personality there is nothing higher in thought or being. Only in Absolute Personality are thought and being, the real and the rational identical. Nothing sub-personal is a sufficient First Principle of explanation, and nothing can be supra-personal except as a fuller human apprehension of the Personal, above all the limitations of finite personality. Thought, mind, self-consciousness, personality being thus the loftiest *ne plus ultra* principle, becomes the ultimate principle of explanation of both nature and humanity. Thus the science of nature and of history must be supplemented or rather fulfilled by a philosophy of nature, and a philosophy of history. But these can never be merely abstract. They only give the form while science and history give the data for the filling. In this sense they are always dependent upon science and history. At best they can take the data up to date, and interpret them rationally—that is, as stages in the process of the finite within the Infinite Form. Hence too new advances in science and new acquisitions in history compel a revision of the details as to rationality. Thus modern science compels philosophy (and philosophy is always speculative, theoretical theology) to revise its theory of creation and its chronology to accord with the theory of evolution. And the results of the historical method compel it to revise its theory of the *jure divino* origin of State and Church and all other forms of moralizing institutions. Only they never do, and never can compel its revision of the ultimate form of explanation—the rationality of the universe, whatever the new details of the process may be, as a process of becoming perfect in and through the Eternally Perfect.

Philosophy despises the cheap form of criticising any science, as science should despise the cheap form of criticising theology, *i. e.*, that of holding up the mistakes of science; of arraying the exploded theories in physics, chemistry, medicine, geology, and biology as proofs of their futility. Surely the historical method applied to any one of the sciences, reveals as lowly and grotesque and now unthinkable forms through which it has devel-

oped, as it does when applied to religious and ethical theories and institutions.<sup>1</sup> Philosophy itself is above dates and changes. But the philosophy of nature, of history and of religion are not so. They are not so, simply because they are dependent for their material upon the ever-changing and ever-increasing details and developing theories of science and history. If it were possible for these ever to make a full inventory and systematization of their data—then a final form of the philosophy—that is—of the whole process of nature and history would be possible, and that would be a rational explanation that would be a *Theodicy*—a justification of the ways of God in the process.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Appendix, note 7.

## CHAPTER V

### ECCLESIASTICAL IMPEDIMENTA<sup>1</sup>

Two facts are patent to-day—the decay and the vitality of ecclesiasticism. Both are really phases of the religious life instituting and nourishing itself with continuity and progress into a vital organism of the life of the spirit. The term *impedimenta* is a convenient one for describing the general characteristics of this critical and vital movement of ecclesiasticism. We may use it, first, in its vulgar sense, of those things which impede and are not necessary to the being or the well-being of the Church; secondly and chiefly, in its classical sense of things which encumber but still are necessary, assisting as well as impeding progress—the necessary means of subsistence and equipment; the supplies, baggage and ammunition carried along with an army.

It is evident that man is by nature a churchman or ecclesiast, as well as a political being. Ecclesiasticism is as genuine and rational a manifestation of human nature as domestic and political institutions. Any merely destructive criticism of the Church is unhuman, and ends with pouring out the baby with the bath, to use the German illustration. Nor can we say that the whole mass must be swallowed uncritically. We find that in opposite quarters both these terms—ecclesiasticism and criticism—are in ill repute, as, indeed, they should be when divorced from each other. But they should not seem to be as mutually repugnant as water and oil. Both stand for real and necessary phases of an organic process. Both are, in varying proportions, age-old, and give promise of being as age-long as man's secular existence. They are both necessary factors in the ethical life of man. Ages of the most absolute

<sup>1</sup> Cf. a partial reprint from an article in *The New World*, September, 1892.



ecclesiasticism have never been free from some ferment of the critical element, and ages of the most radical criticism have never been without their romantic side.

The rational ideal to-day seems to be that of a critical ecclesiasticism, that is, of a visible working church, fully recognizing the results of the modern criticism of its own historical elements, and yet basing itself upon these criticised elements as answering to human nature and needs on their religious side. Men of culture to-day cannot accept an ecclesiasticism which has not been through the fires of criticism, nor will they tolerate mere negative critics, "those nomads of the intellectual world, who will not permit any steady cultivation of the soil." We must frankly and fairly apply all the critical powers of the human spirit to all sources of information as to the genesis and growth of the Church, in order to get that concrete rational comprehension of it that proves it to be founded on the very rock, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. The work done in this line during the last century has been prodigious. It enables us to put ourselves in the place of the chief actors, of those who have been the mouthpieces and the toolmen of the nascent and developing Church. Granting all the results of such work, the question comes, Is the Church worth preserving? But the vitality of the institution answers the question by continuing to exist.

The question may be raised as to the possibility of a critical ecclesiasticism, of a church that lives and thrives under criticism. It is at least certain that we can have critical ecclesiasts. Dean Stanley, Professor Edwin Hatch and the authors of "*Lux Mundi*" show us the union of the two elements. No critic was ever more free and thorough-going in his study of the origin and growth of ecclesiastical institutions than Dean Stanley, and no ecclesiast was ever more heart and hand with a conservative form of the Church than himself.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The *bon-mot* of D'Israeli is well known. In an after-dinner speech Dean Stanley inveighed strongly against all dogmas in the church. D'Is-

We wish to say something of the *impedimenta* of the Church—distinguishing between those which come under the vulgar use of the term and those which come under its classical sense. There are two large questions, however, demanding at least brief notice beforehand. What is the Church? and What is the ideal of knowledge by which we are to estimate it and its *impedimenta*?

The Church, considered as an objective historical fact, may be described as the religious community, springing from and embodying the religious self-consciousness of Jesus Christ. It is the visible community to which the religious spirit in men, influenced by the spirit of Jesus Christ, gave rise—not as an absolutely new organization, but as having its roots primarily in Judaism, and, later on, its branches in the Græco-Roman civilization. It is the institution which the new leaven worked in the social lump coming under its influence. It is visible, one, organic and continuous through nineteen centuries. It is as objective a fact as a continent or a nation. It is something to be reckoned with in making an inventory of concrete human nature or reason, regardless of any *a priori* theories as to the method of its organization. As an organism it has functions. It exists for the edification of its members, and for propagation, or conquering by disciplining all foes. Hence it has an official organization of life, doctrine and worship. It grew, and it still grows, and demands appreciative interpretation. After all the work of critical and historical investigations as to the how and why of its various external forms, comes the deeper task of rational estimation. We need be bound by no traditional views of its historical genesis and variations, but may accept the general results of modern scientific investigation on these points. The organization of the early Christian Churches and their consolidation into the Catholic

raeli nudged him and said, "Yes, Dean, but then you must remember that no dogma means no Dean."

Church under Constantine, are matters of history pretty well understood. In every way the Church is open to as free historical investigation as any other religious, social or political organization. We must take it for what it is, and for what it has been, rather than yield to the assumptions of either an abstract supernaturalism or an equally abstract intellectualism.

What the Church is for us, depends upon our ideal of knowledge. Here again we must claim to be passing beyond the eighteenth, yes, and largely the nineteenth century's abstract conception of reason. Under that conception there was no suspicion that even reason is a development; that it never has existed as an inborn finished codex of clear, fixed notions. Still less could these rationalists apprehend the conception that the truths of reason have been developed only through institutional forms of human activity; that every category which is now used has had a history of incarnation, and that the highest spiritual truths are the most elaborate products of a long process of the developing impulse of the human spirit. Hence, with their shallow intellectual criticism, they could never penetrate to any rational understanding of ecclesiasticism as one of the forms of the real in which the rational—that is, human nature in its highest sense—was realizing itself.

What human nature or reason is, is to be learned only from human history. The ideal of knowledge on this plane should then be a concrete view of the human spirit developing in the various spheres of its activity. To the query, What is truth? the old rationalism answered confidently, logical, intellectual form for the individual. Now the answer should be, that human reason to date is the organic sum total of the æsthetic, ethical, religious, scientific and philosophical manifestations of the human spirit. The impulse to rationality in man has not confined itself to the channel of the logical understanding. Its generous flood has made other and deeper channels, and left æsthetical, ethical and religious categories as monuments

of its self-manifestation. Hence, in treating of ecclesiastical *impedimenta*, we should recognize the absurdity of misapplying the canons of logical truth. Granted that these canons of formal truths have been developed out of the impulse of our mind toward logical knowledge, and toward bringing phenomena to unity, we must also grant that religion rises out of an impulse to establish a right relation between ourselves and God. The Church, no less than logic and science, rises out of an invincible need of human nature, and as such is a manifestation of its progressive rationality. It can no more rationally be called a disease or a perversion than the other manifestations. Is there any need of a Church? Human nature has given the affirmative answer, historically. Is the Church a member of the civic order of the nation? The same answer is given by history. Is it a development of the impulse to rationality? Yes, or else nothing is, and we have absolute agnosticism instead of an ideal of knowledge.

We are exceedingly far from identifying the truth of ecclesiasticism with all truth, or of giving it an undue supremacy. It is much better and quite proper to distinguish the Church from the Kingdom of God. We may well use this latter term for the organic sum total of the developments of the human spirit in all phases of its activity. It is one with our ideal of reality. It is reason so far as it has been incarnate. But it is therefore far too broad and developed a form to apply to ecclesiasticism in testing its *impedimenta*. That would be measuring the part by the whole. The Church is not even identical with moral and spiritual goodness wherever found. It is a definite, visible organization, though a very real and lively member of that total organization of the true, the good and the beautiful among men which we term the Kingdom of God. It exists, not to teach formal logical truth, or natural science, or even æsthetics and ethics, though its mission is much more akin to these latter two, and its kind of reality to theirs. It seeks to elevate man above time and sense

relations into communion with the eternal fountain of life, and to do this through maintaining an ethical communion of its members in this effort.

Hence its teaching must be largely symbolical, using literal time-and-space things in a transcendent sense, and thus rendering void all merely literal criticism of its symbols. Its reality is the ideal of perfect piety, of a communion of saints, and not that of common rationalism, nor even of a philosophy of religion. It has little to do with dry, unveiled literalism. The vulgar rationalism still lingering among us to-day is devoid of the historical and the humane spirit. It despises all symbolical acts, and cannot understand a cult, which is essential to the edification of the Church in worship. It cannot understand dogma, which is the essential intellectual work of the Church in defining its supersensuous reality. It cannot understand its sacred literature, and, using its own canons, it cannot understand any literature beyond that of the multiplication table and the syllogism. It can partially understand its polity, but only to hate it for being an efficient means of maintaining and propagating itself in its rôle of the educator of the race in the communal religious life. It would also dispense with the historical basis for the world's evangelization, and with all incorporations of the ideal in living forms and marked typical events of history. Given its way, it would either dispense wholly with the Church, or endeavor to manufacture one which would be no Church, and would afford no home for the religious life.

The Church knows what edifies, and its strenuous maintenance of these means is justified by the power which they have given it to live and grow. This is one of the most practical of all tests of the reality of an organism. Treat art as the old rationalism would treat religion, and it would vanish away from among men. We should ask what the Church has done in the world and what it is now doing, and take the most objective of all judgments, that of history, as to its being a



genuine world-power, manifesting and promoting the great reality which all religion seeks. Thus, in studying ecclesiasticism, one should reflect on the nature of religion itself, its own proper idea and function in the complex of human nature's activity, as well as upon the ground for its appearance in this or that form, in order to appreciate, and thus only to understand it. As an objective reality, the Church and her ways stand as a marvel of unconscious logic realizing itself in history. Only an *a priori* hatred of religion, which pessimistically sees in it nothing more than a prolonged disease of human nature, can treat this objective institution with disrespect. And only a barren intellectualism will insist on criticising it by other canons than those of its own nature and function.

I. Are there, then, no ecclesiastical *impedimenta*, in the vulgar sense of the term—is there no negative criticism of the Church? Is not our criticism like Balaam's curse?—"I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed them." We have, indeed, thus far sought to ward off the irrational subjective criticism which is so plentiful. We need not, however, shun full criticism of the *impedimenta* that hinder the Church from fulfilling its own true mission. We only insist that these can merely be such as are foreign to its genius, or have outgrown their usefulness. Taking the Church's ideal and mission, many things can be pointed out as being useless and injurious hindrances. The Church militant is not the Church triumphant. Its follies and sins are patent in all ages. But the same is true of every other institution. The political history of the race is full of errors and crimes. The evils of the law are enormous. And yet we would not abolish the state or law. The history of any one of the natural sciences shows follies as absurd and errors as injurious as can be found in either State or Church. The ideal of any organization is never realized, and yet the ideal only comes into consciousness through the progressive realization

of the impulse. The Church simply takes her place with other secular institutions in pleading guilty to such failures.

Let us frankly refuse to admit any real impediments to the marriage of humanity with the bride of Christ. Let us insist upon the Church putting away all such impediments. The critical and historical studies concerning the Church have doubtless disclosed a vast amount of dead, ecclesiastical rubbish, trash, needless scaffolding, bric-a-brac, chips from the growing statue, decayed branches of the growing tree, suckers that are needlessly and criminally draining its strength, fungoid growths, parasitic vines, superfluous clothing upon the racer and armor on the warrior—things that do not make for the edification or the propagation of the Church, and which the Church, nevertheless, holds on to as essential. It is a sympathetic and generous criticism which calls the attention of the Church to these impediments, many of which, however, she has encysted into innocuous inactivity.

Again, from the longest-lived branch of the Church to the most novel modern sect, there is not one form that has not outgrown, and of itself cast aside, much of its earlier *impedimenta*. There has been sufficient of the normal life-power in every one to use up much of its supplies and to drop the rubbish. That ecclesiasticism is ultra-conservative is one of the facts of human nature on that side that is to be taken into account. Demands cannot, therefore, be made upon it that should be made upon other inherently less conservative institutions. To each according to its nature, is certainly a canon of rational criticism. In the long run the Church discards what does not, and adopts what does, edify. The indictment against the evils of conservative traditionalism is made none too strong by even hostile critics. This temper has often led her champions to commit the most glaring crimes against the very foundation principles of morality and humanity, in order to maintain the old as the true, and defeat the new as the false. But in the long run it shows a capacity to assimilate

the best elements of the life of any age, toward the close of that age, and to renounce its own defects and malformations on its way to new and fuller life. It has life. Hence we find in every form, the normal, though tardy process of excretion going along with that of assimilation. Volumes would be needed to catalogue the mass of *impedimenta* thus discarded. We must decline to renew the task here which has already been accomplished by friend and foe. From the dropping by the early Church of the rites of foot-washing and the Agapæ instituted by Christ himself, to the change from hooks and eyes to buttons by the Dunkards, perpetual changes through additions and subtractions have been going on within this organic body, moved by its own vital, semi-unconscious ideal of reality.

The form and the interpretation of her sacred literature, her sacraments, her ceremonies and ritual, her organization and her creeds, have undergone wondrous changes, considering the inherent conservatism of the Church. The Episcopal Church has practically discarded her once dominant standard of the XXXIX *Articles* as "forty stripes save one." The Preface to the Prayer Book sets forth, as the rule for all such changes, "that which may seem most convenient for the edification of the people according to the various exigencies of the times and occasions," "seeking to keep the happy mean between too much stiffness in refusing, and too much easiness in admitting, variations in things once advisedly established," although "in their own nature indifferent and alterable," always allowing "such just and favorable construction as in common equity ought to be allowed to all human writings." The decision of the Church of Rome in regard to the novel "Faribault example," as well as the recognition of the Republic in France, and the Encyclical on the labor question, illustrate the tardy but generally forthcoming adaptation of the most ultra-conservative form of the Church to the needs of the times. Ample apology, however, could easily be made for the

Church's tardiness in all such matters. Conservatism is bound up with her very life and with her power to fulfill her mission.

Again, criticism of *impedimenta* from within the Church itself, is affected by her relatively peaceful or militant condition. Her general attitude is that of the Church militant—an army always preparing for contest even when in secure camp or fortress. A Church passing through a reformation, like a ship in a storm or an athlete in a race, will spontaneously cast aside as real impediments many of the articles of luxury and of relative necessity in times of peace. Baggage will be thrown into the furnace for fuel, or cast overboard to lighten the vessel, which otherwise forms a part of its precious cargo. After the storm, the race, the battle, much of the discarded *impedimenta* will be recovered for renewed use in edifying and propagating the Church. An ecclesiastical renaissance is sure to follow an ecclesiastical revolution. Protestant scholasticism followed quite hard upon the revolt against mediæval scholasticism, and the drift from a bald Protestantism to the more constitutional and æsthetic forms of church life has been going on ever since the Reformation. The Society of Friends, starting with the quaking excitements of its early converts, soon settled down into a formalism of quiet informality, and now furnishes a large number of members to the most liturgical of the Protestant communions. Unitarianism, having fairly won its negative victory against a dead intellectual orthodoxy, is likewise sending its large quota to the same church. The New Theology, now carrying on the more constructive criticism of Calvinism, claims to be a theological renaissance rather than a novelty. Back to the Fathers and the early and mediæval Church! is the war cry of the most narrow type of zealots in the Episcopal Church to-day, and yet they have enough truth to carry a large part of the interest of the Church towards a somewhat needed ecclesiastical renaissance.

Distasteful as may be the methods, spirit and ethics of many of the promoters of such a renaissance in our day, we

may gladly have the work done. However much more congenial one may at times find the intellectual fellowship of those who are fully in touch with modern culture, he cannot allow his taste to prevent him from enjoying his larger spiritual heritage, and encouraging the renaissance which is to put him in touch with all his spiritual ancestry. The modern spirit has been in danger of having its interest so centred upon local affairs as to neglect its classical inheritance. Humanism is often a needed antidote to Philistinism in the Church as well as in literature.

History, however, never repeats itself except *with a difference*. The healthy life of the Church will make abortive all attempts at a mere renaissance of any earlier form. In any renaissance many new forces and materials are added, many of the old forms are discarded, and the remnant is modified and transmuted by the differing environing needs and culture. The old gospel is ever new, even in its donning of ancient garb. It is impossible to specify in detail the amount and sort of ecclesiastical rubbish thus discarded. This would require a history of each great branch, and of every minor form of ecclesiastical organization. Hooks and eyes may be dropped for modern buttons, but days of luxurious peace may come when the old hooks and eyes will regain their place, though they will then be made of pure gold. The use or disuse of all such unessential *impedimenta* must be left to the taste, intellectual and moral as well as æsthetic, of the various societies.

Doctrinaries of Liberalism and Puritanism alike in their Philistinism would strip the Church bare of decent clothing. Both are utterly unappreciative of the sentiment and symbolism that are inseparable from the instituted form of the religious life. In vain will they attempt to unclothe historical Christianity, by setting up the literal form of the anti-ecclesiastical religion of the Christ when on earth. In vain will they stigmatize as "baptized Paganism," and "caricatures of the



holiest," the concrete forms of the living Church, which claims to be the extension of the Incarnation, the Christ widened into the concrete life of the community. They denounce the letter of the Church against the spirit of the Gospel, being incapable of appreciating the spirit of the letter of the Church, the æsthetic and edifying side of ecclesiastical symbolism. Once an infant, always and infant, expresses the unhistorical Puritanic view of Christianity. "The invisible Church" is another term for the same abstract view of Christianity. This answers to the conception of an unincarnate soul in this world. It is a contradiction of terms. For what is invisible is not actually the Church, and what is the Church is not invisible. Even the largest term for human reason, "the Kingdom of God," as the organic sum total of the work of the human spirit under divine education, is not without visible embodiments. The term "ethical Christianity" is another abstraction supposed to represent the real elements of Christianity. But the subjective ethical is itself the product of the objective *ethos* of the community, of its manners, customs and clothes. The ethical is the social, even in Christianity. It is expressed Christianity, the leavened lump.

II. This concrete, historical, objective view of Christianity brings us to the second or classical sense of the term *impedimenta*, as those things which encumber but still are necessary to existence and progress, the necessary means of subsistence and of armament of the Church militant. For the double purpose of self-edification and self-propagation, the Church has always found that it needs an official organization of its life, teaching and worship. The intrinsic difference between an army and the character, functions and end of the Church necessitate a somewhat broader use of the term *impedimenta*. To abbreviate the matter without refining too much, let us take the Declaration of the House of Bishops in the General Convention of 1886, and of the "Lambeth Conference of Bish-

ops of the Anglican Communion" in 1888, as stating the essential *impedimenta* of the Catholic Church, viz.:—

1. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as "containing all things necessary to salvation," and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.
2. The Apostles' Creed, as the Baptismal Symbol; and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.
3. The two Sacraments ordained by Christ himself,—Baptism and the Supper of the Lord,—ministered with unfailing use of Christ's words of Institution, and of the elements ordained by him.
4. The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of his church.

To substantiate these positions in brief, appeal can be made from all subjective tastes and local and temporary prejudices, to the objective judgment of history. The history of the Church is the judgment of the Church. The organic force of the new leaven, the extension of the Incarnation, has always and everywhere manifested itself, edified itself and propagated itself through these channels. We have here two classes of *impedimenta*: 1st, those which minister to the *edification* of the body—the Holy Scriptures and the Sacraments; and 2d, those which minister to its extension—the creed and polity of the Church. In some form, these essential *impedimenta* are found in every branch and sect of the Church. The test is, what administers to edification and to growth? The instinctive logic of the vital organism of the Church has always found these four points to be essential. Surely the Church is sufficiently able to speak for itself. Surely its presence in history as one of the greatest institutions of the human spirit is powerful and great enough to warn off any external abstract judgment as to what is essential to it. To be a world-power, it claims that it must be catholic in length as well as breadth. It therefore rightly denies the rationality of utterly modernizing the Church. It demands continuity in these four essentials.

We must grant that religious experience is only one extract out of the whole circle of the contents of human effort; that the Kingdom of God is the truly catholic manifestation of human nature: but taking this limited range of ecclesiasticism, we must claim for it that the present Christian consciousness forms but a small part of the catholic Christian consciousness. That of every age has been modified by the larger consciousness of humanity in all the range of its experience. Every age has the defects of its own virtues. Let us recognize all the virtues of our own age, but not mistake them for the total of those of many ages. "Modern culture" is a convenient term for housing the results of human nature's conquests in the later centuries. But the very word "modern" defines it as a limited culture. The scientific and historical and critical and social and philosophical acquirements of the times are not the manifestations of the whole of human nature. Ecclesiasticism is also a part of this complex. Men may very wrongfully and irrationally repudiate their connection with the past, but the Church does not. Its consciousness is age-long and world-wide. Modern culture does not meet all humanity's needs, and the Church claims its part in this supply

Moreover, it claims its catholic pedigree. It claims the need of preserving the old within its present living fold, in order to continuity, strength and expansion. We may adapt an illustration from Von Hartmann.<sup>1</sup> In a tree, the real life from the roots is found in the present new layer. The solid stem of dead wood which defies the storm is formed by the earlier growths. The leaves and fruitage of past years help towards this year's fruitage only as they fall to the ground and form soil for the roots, while the slight annular growth has increased its girth, height and solidity. Holding all these in the embrace of its newest layer gives it expansion as well as strength. Hence the first law for the newly sprouting ring is really to embrace and enfold all its predecessors; the second, to

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophie des Unbewussten*, iii.

grow from the root upwards semi-independently. Such has been the method, the unconscious logic, of the Catholic Church. Many of the supposed *impedimenta* have really been encysted to give strength and expansion, and all the essential *impedimenta* have been preserved in its growth from the root upward,—a catholic polity, creed, sacraments, and sacred literature.

No criticism can destroy these four facts done into history by the Church. Open as they are to the most free investigation of their historical how, when and why, they still remain as essential *impedimenta* of an institution that must command the respect of all that have respect for any of the works of man under divine tutelage. At times and in places, each one of them has been used so as to unnecessarily impede the progress of the church, as well as of the larger spiritual realm of the kingdom of God. Bibliolatry, sacerdotalism, orthodoxy and ecclesiasticism, in the vulgar sense of these terms, have sinned against as well as served the religious edification of many generations. The criticism which removes the false gloss from these four facts seems powerless to destroy them. It can only remove the false abstract, "Thus saith the Lord," before each one of them, to replace it with a concrete historical vindication of them as genuine works of the Lord.

It is an old ecclesiastical illusion to identify a divine origin with a certain method of that origin. It is a modern delusion to deny a divine origin to anything which can be traced to its nascent form in the womb of human nature. Some things are divine, and no things are divine,—these are twin forms of error that the concrete, rational estimate of institutions is to correct. In doing this work, it will receive but scant thanks from some in both camps. The narrow zealot and the zealous liberal will each have epithets of malignity to hurl at those who seek to set forth the objective rationality and divineness of human institutions. We are familiar, on the one hand, with such terms of reproach as pantheism and rationalism, and superstition and anthropomorphism on the other hand. And

yet the work goes bravely and rapidly forward, and seems destined to bring out the fuller inclusive truth of the body and soul of the progressive creation of man.

It is the historical and practical estimates, and the changed emphasis of them, that enable and compel us to hold to these four points in a strictly non-sectarian and super-denominational spirit. We have used the term "ecclesiasticism" throughout, only in its rational sense of the visible organization of the Christian religion. It has not come within our limits to deal with it in its current vulgar sense. Like the term "politics," it is commonly, and fairly enough perhaps, used to denote a perverted and vicious method and spirit in the practical working of the organization. The indictment against these twin evils cannot well be made too heavy or severe. The mere ecclesiast is always practically a Jesuit, as the mere politician is a Machiavellian. There is always need of keeping alive a vigorous sentiment against them both, in order to minimize the evils connected with the practical working of the two great rational and necessary forms of well-being in the kingdom of God on earth—the Church and the State.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE ETHICS OF CREED CONFORMITY<sup>1</sup>

"The Aversion of Men of Taste to Evangelical Religion" was the title of a notable essay a generation ago. There are but few signs of any abatement of that aversion yet. The dissonance of dissent makes fully as much noise as the assonance of assent makes harmony in the world of theological dogma to-day. Even the assent is not as cordial as could be desired. Many who profess to like plenty of solid old dogmas swallow them with wry faces. "What is the truth?" asked Lady Chettam of Mrs. Cadwallader, in "Middlemarch." "The truth? he is as bad as the wrong physic,—nasty to take and sure to disagree." Many, again, who complain of the old fetters, are prepared to forge brand-new creeds to fetter others in turn. Others, more disgusted, are ready to apply to all dogmas Dr. O. W. Holmes's *jeu d'esprit* on medicine: "Men would be none the worse off if the whole *materia medica* were dumped into the ocean,—but it would be all the worse for the fish."

However striking all such epigrams may seem, they contain the usual proportion of nine-tenths falsehood to one part of truth. No organized body of wisdom of any one profession or art could be thus dumped into oblivion without ruining many and great human interests, nor without making progress to some better form impossible. Such an iconoclastic procedure is, indeed, wholly out of sympathy with the regnant historical spirit of the day. What were the wants and their environments that made such creeds and institutions grow, and what are the new wants and environments which may be or-

<sup>1</sup>A partial reprint of an article in *The Andover Review*, July, 1892.

ganically related to them in further progress? Such is the question which the historical method puts to every form of human creed, profession, and institution. How did they grow, evolve, and what is the probable trend of their future development? Nothing human is alien to the historical spirit. It is reverent in its study of all of anthropology, in the widest sense of the term. The lowest forms of animal life command the utmost interest of students of nature, and the lowest forms of human thoughts and hopes are surely none the less worthy of the student of man. The meanest flower of the human spirit that blows

"Can give

Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

Surely, the historical spirit to-day will recover for us the worth of creeds that the vulgar rationalism of an unhistorical age criticised almost to the death. If not, the method is untrue to itself, and is not as regnant as its claims to be.

The whole question of the use and abuse of creeds is very far from being a simple one. Creeds have a history, and are explicable by nothing less than all their history of making articulate human needs, and furnishing answers to human wants. Humanity is an organism; past and present, parent and child, "crabbed age and youth," do live together, so that this twentieth century can only, at the peril of its spiritual life, cut itself off from that of other ages.

The sympathetic study of other great world-religions is producing a vaster and more complex appreciation of the spirit of humanity, and it is but fair to suppose that in due time the same spirit will rescue Christianity from the philistines of vulgar rationalism, and recognize its immense significance as a work of the spirit which nothing but a suicidal unreason will dare to ignore. This historical spirit and comparative method will soon be busy in raising from the deeps of oblivion and obloquy every form of Christian belief, not merely in the way of an amateur antiquarianism, but with genuine interest in its

own spiritual heritage. It will lead us to put ourselves in the place of all the church doctors of creed-making ages. Theoretically, at least, the historical method has banished to the limbo of phantoms the abstract individual who used to be paraded as the creator and monarch of himself, and has turned its attention to the social man as a member of an age-long and world-wide organism. It thus declines to hear any individual say, "I believe," and insists upon his speaking in the plural number, and for the past as well as present experience. *We*, the church of the ages, believe. The *I* always implies the *we*. And the present *we* always implies the *they* of previous generations of Christians. *I*, the heir of nineteen centuries of Christendom, believe. Such is the only formula that the historical method can permit any rational Christian to utter to-day.

The historical method is simply that of evolution applied to the work of the human spirit instead of to nature. Difference of nature and spirit necessarily modify the method and the results in the two cases. Again, this method cannot tolerate any would-be new creed makers. Languages, institutions, creeds, are not made, they grow. Only topsy-turvy abnormalities can be thus manufactured *instantly*. Nor will the method permit fragments of doctrine to be torn from their natal context and their organic place, by either friend or foe of creed. It all grew, and can only be appreciated through a sympathetic study of the history of the organism, as a work of the spirit. The historical method is the category of rationality in the humanities to-day, as that of evolution is in science. It is only when this modern spirit is caught napping that it will listen to any *pro* and *con* arguments based upon the abstract conception of rationality of the eighteenth century. It is true that no one formula is sufficient to fully express the spirit and method of an age. And yet formulas do give us definite general measures of various epochs. In the eighteenth century, the rationalism of the mere understanding got the supremacy, and the

category then used was that of "naturalism," which conceived all things as static, permanent, distinct. Innate ideas, common sense, natural religion, and immutable conscience; the rights of man, and the uniformity of nature, reason and revelation,—everything had the static form that could be weighed, measured, and defined. The criticism of the understanding was considered to be able to strip off all the adventitious wrappings and reveal their common static elements. Unhistoricity was the characteristic of its whole study of human institutions, beliefs, and ideals. Human nature, like nature, had been made once for all. Nothing developed through lower into higher forms. Change meant only decay. Even Christian apologists sought to prove Christianity by showing it to be "as old as creation" and but a "republishing of the religion of nature."

Where deism had not thus devitalized Christianity, a none the less abstract and static conception of revelation worked the same evil. Christianity, the Bible, and the Church were conceived of as having been, once for all, shot out of the supernal heights. Historical perspective was unknown. There was really no history,—only events, natural and supernatural. The past was studied in the spirit of "the lawyer searching for a precedent, not that of the historian who resuscitates the whole spirit and force of a buried age," in order to understand his own age. This static conception of the eighteenth century was also applied to the reason. Reason was thus held to be of a certain definite magnitude, consisting always of the same fixed, clear conceptions. This abstract form then served as the standard for measuring the rationality of every kind of creed and institution. There was no conception of reason expanding and developing under the stimulus of subjective needs and changing environment. To-day, however, we always look for the various stages of the impulse to rationality, in different ages, climes, and cultures. Rationality is looked upon as an historical process of the inward impulse. It is not a fixed sum of innate ideas or categories. Hence progress and continuity,

as well as constancy, are looked for as elements of reason. Again, the conception of reason as an abstract form, apart from concrete historical institutions, is abandoned to-day. Reason is rather the immanent formative form, present in early and late, in imperfect and temporary stages of state, church, literature, and social life.

These, in their widely different forms, have represented the relatively rational for their respective times and problems, and have entered, in transmuted form, as elements into future stages of the same. Past forms of creed and cult are estimated by their own contemporary situations, problems, and solutions. The Saints and the Fathers, while not appealed to as authorities for us, are recognized as generally the actual and rational authorities for their own times,—the mouthpieces of the regnant *Zeitgeist*. We endeavor to think what Augustine and Luther thought, not that we may stop at their thought, but that we may take it up as an element in the rational whole of theological speculation; that we may enter into our Christian heritage in order that we, like them, may transmit it, in richer form, to our descendants. This "historic sense," however, is not yet the common possession of the clerical mind. An English clergyman, being asked his opinion of the Salvation Army, replied: "Could any one imagine Jesus Christ as an officer of such a remarkable organization?" To this it was aptly replied, that "a person could as easily imagine Jesus Christ as a Salvation Army officer, toiling in the slums of London, as he could imagine Him a Bishop or an Archbishop, with his five thousand or twenty-five thousand pounds a year, and a seat in the House of Lords." The historic sense enables one to imagine *both* of these positions, under different conditions. So, too, it enables one to trace the progress in Christian doctrine from the Sermon on the Mount, to and through the Nicene Creed, and to recognize the law of development, in all this *post* New Testament work. Cardinal Newman thought that if St. Athanasius or St. Ambrose should suddenly come to life in the



modern Oxford, either of them would find the true church in some small Roman chapel in a forlorn suburb, where mass was said, rather than in the ornate service of a stately English cathedral. To this it is replied, that if any saint of the early church should *suddenly* come to life, knowing nothing of the march of mind and social life in the interval, he might find himself more at home in some small chapel which has kept itself aloof from the main current of church life, and thus been left forlorn. But if any of the early Fathers had lived through all the great phases of life and thought since their day, as we can do, it is not conceivable that they would reject all the fruitage of these epochs, or refuse to enlarge and correct their provincial views, any more than they would refuse to avail themselves of modern speech, science, and culture.

With this historic sense, it is we who are the ancients, the possessors of the wisdom of all former ages of Christian thought. For us there has been a larger development of the rationality of Christian doctrine, a richer unfolding of the content of the Christian spirit. The rational in Christian thought for us of to-day means the organic sum total of the efforts of the Christian spirit at self-realization. We have ample means to free ourselves from all provincial philistinism; to purge out all merely subjective views by a large and free reading ourselves into the various points of view in the long course of historical development of Christian thought. We have the means of absorbing all that Christian tradition has to offer us, and to recognize the various stages of rationality thus presented. Only when we have thus made ourselves masters of what has gone before, have thought ourselves into the insights of the world's great seers, have thoroughly romanticized, and thus filled our empty selves with the concrete content of historical development, can we attain to holding our large heritage in a free and independent manner.

Let this conception of the modern historical view of rationality be applied to the sum total of Christian creeds, instead of

the former abstract conception of reason, and we shall have a very different sort of estimate of creeds from that of vulgar rationalism. The whole question of conformity to the creedal expression of the historical Christian consciousness as a nineteen-century-long organism will appear in a new light. We are, of course, only speaking of the conformity which concerns those who consider themselves the most enlightened and intellectual of their fellow-men,—of those who have been thoroughly disillusioned as to the naïve, unreflecting, and unquestioning acceptance of the Christian heritage that the large part of Christendom gives. Such acceptance, indeed, forms a part of that of the most intellectual sort. Into the religious, as into the social and intellectual *ethos* of his community, has each individual been baptized and confirmed,—largely educated by it. But to the reflective spirit, the interpretation, the relative worth and emphasis, of the different parts will be different. First he will note that creeds cannot be abstracted from the whole context of the religious life and organism without losing their proper position and significance. Such abstraction is, indeed, necessary for this purpose of the scientific study of them as one part of the whole sphere. Then he will note that, when thus abstracted for this purpose, they have order, permanence, development, and continuity, and that they are not to be taken *en masse*. Creed-making epochs will be studied in the sympathetic spirit of the historical method, and then in the critical comparative methods of subsequent epochs of reflection. The thread of continuity will be held on to as he traces the development of the unspecified universal, the generic principle into its particular organic phases under the influence of varying needs and environments. Thus, much mere rubbish will be cast aside,—chips from the block of marble growing into the statue. The death of old forms will be noted as passing into the nascent forms of succeeding stages.

“Music, when soft voices die,  
Vibrates in the memory;

Odors, when sweet violets sicken,  
Live within the sense they quicken."

Then he will note the difference between the œcumenical creeds of Christendom and the confessions of faith and systems of dogma in local branches of the church, and the constant relation of the former to the changing content of the latter. In the latter, too, he will seek not merely a collection and classification, but also a unification of them through the central organic principle of Christianity. His historical and comparative study of them, as the ever changing result of men's intellectual effort to formulate their religious experience, will create the sympathetic spirit of appreciation of at least their results, though the end be not yet attained. He will then be prepared to reintegrate them into the whole concrete social organism of Christianity, as a great institution developing from "that holy thing" in the Virgin's womb, which was born into the complex of social and religious environment of the Græco-Roman Empire; passing through that of many races and ages since then,—ever changing, ever developing, and yet ever continuous in its organic life. The place of tradition, the worth and necessity of the great insights of great Christian men and epochs, will be fully recognized, while he will decline to divorce any part of the whole past, or of the present, of Christian creed from the central heart-principle of the Person of the founder of Christianity.

The Personality of the Christ is the ultimate touchstone by which we must estimate all creeds. They shall not hide our Lord from us. So far as they reveal Him, they supply the criterion of their own worth and limitations. But it is this divine Personality throbbing through and animating them all, rather than as coming directly to each individual Christian, that is the touchstone. The whole fabric is a social organic one. The portrait of the Master is multiform, and yet must be unified by the historical method. We must place ourselves before the Johannine, the Petrine, the Pauline, the Patristic,

the Scholastic, and the Protestant portraits of our Lord, and recognize his lineaments in them all ; get as it were a composite photograph on the historical canvas ; which preserves and enriches any private revelation to the soul, and furnishes the criteria for the estimate of all single portraits. All Christian schemes of doctrine are but diverging streams flowing from the one great fountain, going forth to water the earth. They represent the leaven of that One Life, leavening various portion of the lump.

But Christ himself is greater than all his resulting manifestations, greater than all these portraits, as He was greater than all Jewish Messianic conceptions in his fulfillment of them. In subscribing to any creed, we are only confessing Christ. Woe be to us if He be not greater than any one of our creeds. Woe be to us, also, if we fail to appreciate the revelation in all of them. But a greater woe upon us if we stand dogmatically before any one portrait of Christ and say, this is the only true and original one. No revelation of Christ comes directly to the individual, without the mediation of some form of sound doctrine and life. We are members one of another from the very beginning of the Christian commonwealth. Hence no creed is of merely private interpretation. It represents the corporate Christian consciousness gradually taking explicit and developing form. The germ, the generic leaven, is the historical Christ of the New Testament. Starting from this norm, the historical method traces the unity and continuity in all the diverse forms of development and of creedal statement. Any development that results in the very opposite of its beginning, is abnormal and false ; and any form that grows dogmatically rigid becomes lifeless and sterile. The historic Christ and all succeeding secular environments of the Christian life give the total of elements to be considered in testing the genuineness and worth of any creedal development. To-day it is only the new which is indissolubly and organically connected with the old, that is true in Christian doctrine. Other

sort of rationality is beyond the pale of the genuine historical method. It is equally irrational to seek to stereotype Christian thought according to the form of the first, the fourth, or the sixteenth century, or to seek to make a brand-new creed for the twentieth century. The old and the new can alone give us the true for to-day. Our minds must be both attached to and detached from bygone formulas. To esteem only our present provincial view as the truth, is as great and soul-destroying an error as to esteem a bygone view as ultimate. The deadliest of all heresies against reason is that which limits it to one age or one type of thought. What more absurd form of irrationality can be imagined to-day than that which modern orthodoxy till recently made as to creed subscription. Put in its naked form, the demand was this: Christianity is essentially doctrine. Here are the only *ortho-dogmata*. Each individual must yield unfeigned assent to their literal form from personal insight into their truth, all historical perspective aside. It thus has reverted to either scholastic fetters or to antinomian individualism. In the latter and ultimate form of orthodoxy, it must result in the individual isolating himself from all ecclesiastical inclosures and making a new one for himself.

The old Scotch woman doubted of the orthodoxy of all except herself and her Donald, and sometimes, she said, she doubted if even Donald was quite orthodox. The whole method of the appeal to the individual assent to the literal form of untransmuted provincial confessions of faith is false and vicious. It does not commend itself to the historical spirit of the day as healthy or normal. It has had its day, and is reaping its natural harvest of dissent and heterodoxy and wholesale agnosticism. Its creed stringency produced, first, thought-strangulation, and then lawless free-thinking, divorced from all historical continuity with the Christian heritage of eighteen centuries. Its rationalism is no longer rational. Its modern strait-jacket confessions of faith can no longer be laid upon the back of recalcitrant Christians. There is not to-day a



single modern "Platform," "Confession of Faith," or "Thirty-nine Articles of Religion," that commands the literal allegiance formerly demanded. The requiring such literal assent to novel and provincial formularies as a condition of church membership, is a modern barbarism that seems to be nearly outgrown. The modern scholasticism of Protestantism is causing a revolt as profound as that of the Reformation. The critical, comparative, and historical methods are all against it. In place of this we have either the utter dissidence of dissent, or the return to the concrete social view of Christianity, in which creeds take their place in Christian worship and education.

The church is far more and other than creeds and articles. It is the home of the life-long spiritual culture of its members. It indoctrinates them only as the family does its members. The one who has passed through this pedagogical process, and comes to reflect upon it, can never do so in the abstract way demanded by *merely external criticism*.

He reflects on nothing in isolation. He reflects not merely upon the creeds, but upon the whole spiritual *ethos* in which he has been educated. More than this, he reflects upon the whole *ethos* of historical Christianity, and only upon the creeds as part of this concrete process. He thinks through all that can be said against creeds, and knows the historical and psychological conditions of their genesis, their limitations, their worth, and their necessity. He thus becomes a relatively universalized individual; a Christian who has lived through and thought through all the growth of creeds in their context of Christian life, and thus assents to them in the name of the church universal. "I, John ———, do hereby, with my whole nineteen-century-long history and thought, yield unfeigned assent to the result of this history and thought, as embodied in the historical creed now before me."

Something like this is the formula in which the modern category of rationality puts creed-conformity for us. It would reverse Emerson's apothegm: "Whoso would be a man must be

a non-conformist," or, at least, supplant it by some of Emerson's own more genial expressions, such as

"All are needed by each one;  
Nothing is fair or good alone."

Whoso would be a man must be a conformist.<sup>1</sup> Unchartered freedom not only tires, but it also dehumanizes. And yet the conformity must be to something universal, historical, and rational, and not to any provincial form, either novel or antique. Nor can it be literal conformity to an inflexible creed, asking a man to bind himself never to grow. Development from œcumenical statements of the faith is the least that can be demanded. And the historical estimate of modern confessions of faith gives them this elastic and roomy character, in place of the strait-jacket sort of use formerly made of them.

De-Calvinizing Calvinism by Calvinists is the patent process before our eyes to-day. Bend or break is its only alternative. It is bending, and the historical method justifies and assists in the bending process. In its naked and literal form it is repellent enough, but many are wise to still "like it," while they are reforming it. History is making its weight felt against mere *dicta* of Luther, Calvin, and Armenius, as well as against the *dicta* of the older Fathers. Their systems of theology are fast becoming chiefly significant as historical monuments, records of past interpretations of the ever-expanding revelation of the fullness of Christ, witnesses of the historical limitations of the ages which gave them birth. This historical appreciation of their worth and their limitations, is the assent which we yield to them, in accepting them as part of that Christian heritage, which we dare not wrap up in a napkin or preserve as a mummified fetich. We thus express our deep reverence for the lively faith of our fathers, enshrined in these venerable monuments of religious insight and theological attainments. We assent to them in their place in the history of Christian doctrine, as containing much truth, and telling us much about

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chap. I.

Christ. The vicarious element, which must belong to all members of any body, enters into all this preservation of formulas of our fathers' and our brethren's faith.

We dare not, we cannot, rationally attempt to make brand-new, unhistorical formulas for ourselves. We are members one of another,—old and young, first, fourth, sixteenth and twentieth centuries,—we are all one body in Christ, and from all utterances of this age-long body goes up to heaven one harmonious anthem of reverence and love to our common Lord and Master. Many dialects, but one language; many forms, but one spirit; many portraits, but one Christ. Mere intellectual agreement as to form of statement becomes of less consequence as we become better educated. A healthier and more humane attitude towards all temporary and partial statements of the unstatable is the slowly coming but proper result of that historical spirit that finds nothing human alien to itself. Recognition of our indebtedness for our present culture, to our nurture in opinions which we have outgrown, tempers our reaction against them, and leads us to honor our fathers in the faith when we ourselves have become fathers. We have a thoroughly rational, that is, historical conception of the true worth and authority of creeds. We are not fetich-worshippers, nor are we iconoclasts. We know the history of all "confessions of faith," every word of some of them molten in the fire of controversy, hastily dispatched from a battlefield, or forged as the heated manifesto of a victorious faction. We know the proper place of doctrine in the concrete complex of Christianity, of which larger life it is an imperfect intellectual abstract. We know the limitless field these limiting statements have to deal with, and the limited capacity of human conception and language,—to-day as well as yesterday. We know the worth of symbolism, of poetry, and anthem. We know that all things vital grow, and that change and decay are parts of vital development. We know, too, the historical and the ethical heart of all creeds, the "Alpha and Omega," "the desire of

nations," the ideal man, the spiritual Christ, the axis and the goal of the world's history. To this we assent under all traditional form of sound words as they have been the divine *media* for revealing it to us.

We appreciate and care, too, for the historic development of this central heart of all faith in form of sound words. We dare not discard them for ourselves and our children. We hold them in deepest human reverence, though we must confess that when we measure the bones of the giants of the Fathers of old, we find them no larger than our own, begotten by them. We find, in a word, that creedal conformity is our bounden duty, and a wholesome service as members of the most truly human and most truly divine form of institutional life that has educated us into our present Christian freedom and manhood. In all that we have said thus far, we have referred chiefly to the modern Protestant forms of confessions of faith, rather than to the œcumenical creeds, which have been, as Dr. Schaff says, "the common property of all churches," or to the Nicene Creed, which the Declaration of the American House of Bishops and the Anglican Lambeth Conference have declared to be "a sufficient statement of Christian doctrine," in the unification of Christendom.

The historical vindication of this time-honored universal creed, shows it as "*the* form of sound words," which can from many doctrinal distresses free us, and afford the basis for building all subsequent theological opinions into a scientific theology. We believe that it can be demonstrated to be rational for us to hold "the Nicene Creed to be a sufficient statement of doctrine," and an *ultimate* statement of doctrine, so far as it met and answered the then opposing world-views; that we can rationally conform to any environing "confession of faith" or "articles of religion," subject to this œcumenical and rational creed, as the scientific development, so far as it goes, of the historical norm of faith in the Holy Scriptures. All the historical conditions of its formation,—an undivided Chris-

tendom, special philosophical culture, meeting the most profound opposing world-views, profound reservation from minute deductions and definitions,—its rising like a lofty peak above all the fogs and din of lower battlefields, its venerable antiquity, expressive of the deepest and of the most enduring Christian consciousness, all this, and much more, make it to be the one symbol, the one sacred hieroglyph, to which a philosophy of history demands loyal assent from every rational Christian. The whole of the ethics of creed conformity ultimately comes to a vindication of the historical rationality of this monumental symbol of the Christian faith, as a “Franchise of Freedom and a Charter of Comprehension,” though forged in the midst of such tumult, violence, and trickery as would disgrace any modern ecclesiastical council. But the modern superstitious notion of the infallibility of even œcumenical councils was not then thought of. Its worth is purely intrinsic. Its heart is the doctrine of the Incarnation; of the perfect manhood and full Godhead of Jesus Christ. It defines only negatively against great errors. It is utterly free from interpretations and theories as to the method of creation, of inspiration, of human salvation, of sacramental grace, of the future life; and thus levels the huge mountains of theological theories that have served to divide portions of the Lord’s vineyard, and to perplex, dishearten, and render skeptical so many sons of God. This, and very much more, should be said about the Nicene formula as the genial and genuine “*Formula Concordiæ*,” the liberator of the perplexed conscience and the doubting intellect of Christendom to-day. We believe that a full and candid historical study of the Nicene Symbol will prove it to be the larger and more constitutional form of statement needed to-day,—an intrinsically valuable and valid gift of a genuine creed-making epoch to all subsequent dogma-ridden ages.



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE GROUND OF CERTITUDE IN RELIGION<sup>1</sup>

#### PART I.—REASON AND AUTHORITY IN RELIGION

“Father, don’t you know that we left that word ‘must’ behind when we came to this new country?” This was Patrick’s reply to a priest, who said that he *must* take his children from the public school and *must* send them to the parish school. This fairly represents the uttered, or concealed, reply of the mass of thinking men in the modern world, to any presentation of the old authorities, when prescribed without further ground than an uncriticised imperative.

We have left behind the *must* of an infallible Church, of an infallible Bible, and of an infallible reason. Each one of these in turn has been abstracted from an organic process, and proposed as the authoritative basis of belief. The inadequacy of the proof for such infallibility has rendered this claim of each one of no effect. The abstract reason, which was first used to discredit the other two, has fallen into the pit which itself digged, and *de profundis* rise its agnostic moans. Hence the task laid upon us in these days is that of inquiring whether these old *musts* do not have a real authority, other and more ethical than the one rightfully denied; to see whether they do not have a natural and essential authority that rational men must accept in order to be rational.

A criticism which is merely negative is both irrational and unhuman. The function of criticism is to be the dynamic,

<sup>1</sup> This chapter is taken from a volume now nearly out of print, *i. e.*, *Reason and Authority in Religion*, published by T. Whittaker, New York.

forcing on from one static phase of belief and institution to another; to destroy only by conserving in higher fulfilled form. Its aim can only be to restore as reason what it first seeks to destroy as the unreason of mere might; to restore as essential realized freedom what it momentarily rejects as external necessity. Such work involves a thorough reformation of the whole edifice of dogma and institution, a thorough reappréciation of the genuine worth of these works of the human spirit under divine guidance.

Such a task implies an ideal of knowledge vastly different from that of ordinary rationalism. That holds an abstract subjective conception of truth, imagined under the form of mathematical equality or identity. This method, on the contrary, simply undertakes to understand *what is*, or concrete experience, under the conception of organic development in historic process. It can attempt no demonstration of the organic process of religion by anything external to it. It seeks only to give an intelligent description of the process. The process itself gives the conception of its rationality. It declines to abstract any part of the process, or to seize any one of its static moments and make that the measure or the proof of the whole, as ordinary apologetics attempt to do. The real history of religion, then, like the real history of any organism in nature, is its true rationality and vindication.

The reason appealed to, also, is that which manifests itself in the corporate process, and not in the individual member. A religious individual is an abstraction. The truth is the whole concrete historical institution of which he is a member. Only as he experiences or mirrors the various stages of this organic life, can he understand or express the rationality of religion. His certitude rests upon authority, which he, as autonomic, must finally impose upon himself. Objective rationality can only thus become subjective and afford real grounds of certitude. Such a method of acquiring rational certitude may not satisfy those whose ideal of knowledge is that of ordinary rationalism.

But have we not vainly tried to satisfy such an ideal long enough? Has not the century and a half of "the age of reason" landed us in agnosticism, from which it cannot extricate us? Are we not ready to abandon the attempt of such rationalism and try the higher method? This method consists in an historical and a philosophical study of religion.

The historical inquiry should first enable us to see the value of Bible and Church as records and aids of the religious life of the past. The philosophic inquiry should then enable us to see their necessity and worth to the religious life of our times. Neither of these methods is so irrational as to dare to sectarianize our religious life from that of the past. Both see this life as a continuous process, and only seek to understand and interpret what has been, as an aid to what should be. Neither of them are individualistic.

The whole swing of the pendulum of thought to-day is away from the individual, and towards the social, point of view. Theories of society are supplanting theories of the individual. The solidarity of man is the regnant thought in both the scientific and the historical study of man. It is even running into the extreme of a determinism that annihilates the individual. Both theology and ecclesiasticism have passed through this extreme, which we may call the Chinese phase of belief and life. The Protestant world is slow to yield to the *Zeitgeist* heralding a retreat from individualism to socialism, dreading a repetition of its tyranny. But the swing of the pendulum has also begun in these spheres. "Martyrs of disgust" may be the loudest and foremost fuglemen in the retreat. But this does not prevent the heralds of concrete reason from advancing backward to reclaim their neglected heritage. The institution and the creed of the whole are being seen to have a rational authority that must be recognized. Society is seen to be the obligatory theatre for the realization of freedom. Its authority is seen to be that of order and harmony of individual minds and wills. No Church no Christian, no œcumenical creed no right belief.

But Church and Creed are already old. We cannot manufacture totally new ones. Nor can we accept the old forms at their old worth, as fetters of thought and action. We have outgrown *that* form of their authority, as the child outgrows the paternal authority. So we think. But the analogy is not perfect. Besides, the authority of the father as that of a full-grown man, which develops the powers of the child, is never fully shaken off. Nor does the individual member of a community ever outgrow the larger wisdom of the whole.

The danger of a weak romanticizing; of pathetically pessimistic distrust of reason causing an uncritical acceptance of all the old bonds, should not deter us from seeking a *rationale* of them that will compel an ethical submission to their rightful authority. But it should put us on our guard against humoring a weak phase of the human spirit, which comes when its wings droop from weariness, so that a plunge into the ocean beneath seems relief. It should also put us on our guard lest the oncoming of this social view be permitted to take an abstract form, and thus crush out the might and right of personality. We should be alert to carry with us all the hard-won fruits of Protestantism. The danger is that we may find ourselves slaves again.

The two phases of authority for which Apologetics ordinarily contends are the intellectual and the practical. The first is that of creed or orthodoxy, the other is that of institution or Church. Till recently the burden of Apologetics has been the maintenance of orthodoxy, which has largely meant Calvinism, founded upon an unhistorical interpretation of an assumed infallible Bible. Such Apologetics has had its day. It has almost destroyed both orthodoxy and the Bible.

The other phase of Apologetics now claims to be heard. It claims to include the task of the former phase. The Church, as the author of the creed and the Bible, proposes to vindicate them as parts of its process—as its own offspring—in vindicating itself as the practical embodiment and promoter of Chris-

tianity. We need scarcely disclaim any sympathy with this phase as represented by Romanist and High-Anglican. The common method of both is arbitrary, abstract, unhistorical, dogmatic and unconvincing. It is the "must" which Patrick left behind in the old country. But Patrick never leaves his patriotism behind. He has a double sort of patriotism for both his old and his new country. He is unreflectingly wiser and more concrete than the abstract rationalist who owns "no tribe, nor state, nor home," nor content, except what he makes for himself. Nor can we leave the Church behind. It has helped make us what we are. The rational form of this method, then, commands sympathy. It should include a historical and psychological study of the institution, in order to arrive at a philosophical vindication of its rational authority over individuals, as constitutive of their essential well-being. This affords a relative vindication of the various phases, and an absolute vindication of the whole process and its results. The end justifies the means; is immanent in and constitutive of these. But this process and result are in and through the community. The Church is Christianity. Its ground of certitude and authority is in the whole. It is in the light of this general conception of an organic social process, that we must seek for the ground of certitude in both subjective and objective religion.

Certitude is conviction resting on discernment, as a constant element in all the activity of our mental and spiritual faculties. The certitude resting on authority or on testimony, really rests on a discernment of their reasonableness. Thus certitude is personal. It is the yea and amen of private judgment. It comes from the manifestation of the truth by God through *media*. In the case of religious certitude, the inclusive medium is the Church. But no doctrine of the Church as an organism that denies the right and duty of private judgment can remain an ethical one. Protestantism has bought this at too great a price to be bartered away. It is only as against an abstract individualism that ignores the patent fact, that one



is what he is by virtue of the social tissue in which he lives, that there is need of reasserting the authority of this constitutive environment. But this must be an ethical organism, inclusive of, and living only in and through its individual members. It is just as true that the Church exists in and through its individual members, as it is that they exist in and through the Church. It is a kingdom of persons where all are kings, because all are persons, and not an abstract external authority. It is an organism of organisms, a person of persons, a Holy Spirit that only lives and realizes itself on earth through personal members. This much is said here, to guard against any suspicion of reverting to the abstract conception of the authority of the Church as a ground of certitude, which was "the infinite falsehood" of mediæval ecclesiasticism.

I have used the singular, *ground*, instead of the plural, *grounds*, because what we wish is a vital organic universal, instead of a number of abstract particulars. "To be confined within the range of mere grounds, is the position and principle characterizing the sophists." This species of accidental, arbitrary, special-pleading reasoning; this giving a *pro* for every *con*; this age of reason (of grounds) in Apologetics, had full sweep in the eighteenth century and far enough into the nineteenth to be responsible for much of the prevalent scepticism.

To-day, the ordinary grounds or proofs of our religion are justly called in question, and we are asking for a fundamental universal *ground* (an *Urgrund*) of them all—prophecy, miracle, the incarnation, the Bible, the Church, and reason—for the authority of all these authorities.

This *Urgrund* must be an organic first principle which unfolds into a philosophy of religion as the only final and satisfactory Apologetic for Christianity; a first principle which vindicates religion as a genuine and necessary factor in the life of man, and Christianity as the fruition of all religion. Resting either in the simple faith of childhood; or on abstract external evidences; or yielding blindly to external authority by arbitrary

wilful repression of thought, as did the late Cardinal Newman: none of these methods are possible to-day. Mere dogma and mere external evidences and authority are no antidote to doubt, no grounds of certitude in our day.

It is needless to multiply words in describing the patent phase of current religious thought. It is, in brief, one of unrest and doubt, and yet also one of faith and reconstruction. It is attempting the necessary feat of swallowing and digesting its own offspring of doubts. It is on its way to an *Urgrund* which cannot be something outside of itself. This can be nothing but the generic principle which, as constitutive and organic, is implicit throughout its whole process. At best there can be but an approximate comprehension of this immanent life-principle. But it is the task which the thoughtful human spirit feels as a categorical imperative. There is an underlying faith or certitude, even in those phases where negative results are most conspicuous. There is an everlasting yea beneath doubt, which alone renders doubt possible.

Religion is acknowledged to be one of the great human universals, co-extensive with man's history, and as varied in form as his culture. It is truly and essentially human. It is a necessary part of humanity's life. No religion, imperfect man. Organizations may decay and theologies crumble, but the religious spirit lives on through and above these changes, making for itself ever more congenial and adequate manifestations and organs of its perennial life—rising on stepping stones of its petrified forms to higher ones. With art and philosophy it forms the triad of man's relations with the Absolute Spirit. In these three inter-related and mutually sustaining spheres is exhibited the perfection of his spiritual character and functions. The creative object, the ultimate and constitutive ground of them all, is God.

What is religion? A descriptive definition of the totality of phenomena which constitutes religion would be too extensive. So too would be a mere enumeration of the definitions of it that

have been proposed. But most of such definitions have a common heart, and proceed from a varied reflection of a common truth. Religion is at least a conscious reverential relation of man to God. It may be "morality tinged with emotion," but that emotion must come from impact of the soul with God. It is a spiritual activity of self-relation to the great "Power not ourselves," through feeling, thought and will. It is a striving to fall upward from the mere physical side of our life. But this implies—and implies as its essential presupposition—the falling down, the self-relation of this Power to man. We must therefore define religion as *the reciprocal relation or communion of God and man*.

These two sides of this organic process may be termed (1) Revelation, (2) Faith. That is, the self-relation of God to man constitutes the conception of revelation; the self-relation of man to God constitutes that of faith. The two elements are correlative, though that of God's activity is both chronologically and logically primal, and evocative of the other. Thus religion rests upon a universal. It is not merely subjective. We cannot abstract faith from revelation. For it is only both together that give us the concrete content of religion.

(1). Revelation is the moment of divine self-showing in the organic process which constitutes religion. As the self-relation of God to man, it is a primal and perennial act, which, in religion, is recognized as a phase of one's own personal experience. As *immediate*, it forms the background of all human life—sentient, mental and moral. It forms the *supra*-nature of humanity, and is creative of it. Back of, beneath, immanent in (*μετά*) all that is human, there is that which constitutes and sustains it. This metaphysics of man, mental and moral, is the immanent, immediate relation of God to humanity. But the term is generally confined to what we may call *mediated* revelation. God's self-relation to us is continually mediated and brought to our consciousness through our physical, mental, moral and social relations. He is immanent in these relations,

and thus reveals himself to our conscious experience. It is through our knowledge of nature, through our knowledge and love of our brethren—that is, through our knowledge of the physical and moral world-order—that we become conscious of God's relation to us. Signs and tokens and mighty works, Bible and Church, family and social life, have all been used as *media* of this revelation. Revelation, however mediated, constitutes the *objective* side of religion.

(2). *Faith* is the *subjective* side. It is man's conscious apprehension of God thus related to him through revelation. It embraces all the constituent elements of the human side of religion—the apprehension of the Godward side of all that we do or say or think. Faith is faith. This tautological definition is compulsory, from the nature of the activity. It is a primal, basal activity of the human spirit. It is the simplest, and yet may be the most complex, activity of conscious man. It has no special organ and is no special faculty, but is the dynamic in all our faculties. It contains elements of feeling, thinking and willing, because it is the *actus purus* prevenient and coöperating with all these faculties. It is the spirit's apprehension of realities through these faculties. It is its practical self-consciousness of the Absolute. It is the self practically conscious of itself, in its relation with God. Thus it is only another name for the highest phase of self-consciousness.

Such self-consciousness is never merely *subjective*. Its contents are the results of the mediation of all its physical, social and religious environment and training, and ultimately of God, through these *media*. Religious faith—and specifically Christian faith—is God's children's cry of Abba, Father. It is their apprehension of their divine sonship, the responsive thrill of emotion awakened by the consciousness of God's paternal relation to them. Abraham's faith was his consciousness of friendship with God. Our faith is our consciousness of divine sonship through his eternal Son, Jesus Christ. Such Christian faith is a very profound and simple, and yet a most complex

stage of self-consciousness. It involves the mediation of a Christian education, which implies that of nineteen centuries of the Church's life. Thus, while our faith is subjective and personal, it is only so because we have been educated into the conscious possession of the Christian heritage of centuries. Our personal subjective faith itself, as well as objective faith, is grounded upon and mediated for us through institutional Christianity.

Thus the objective ground of religion is God, and the subjective ground faith—or the simple apprehension, through more or less media, of this relation—thus converting the whole into the process of reciprocal relations between God and man, which constitute religion.

It will not do to substitute for God "the Power not ourselves," Law, Force, Substance, or any *sub*-personal category. And the non-personal is always *sub*-personal. It may be acknowledged that some scientific conceptions of law, order, nature, cosmos, are higher in one sense than some anthropomorphic conceptions of God, but they are never *supra*-personal, and can never afford the conscious relation we call religion. Our analysis of the content of consciousness can only arbitrarily stop short of that of self-consciousness, or self-determined totality.

If the charge is made that our conception of the first principle as personal is merely subjective—the imaginative reflection of our own mind upon phenomena—it may at least be met by the counter-charge of the same subjectivism in scientific conceptions. Matter, law, force, are equally subjective measurements of the objective by the subjective. But this *argumentum ad hominem* is only a side thrust of thought on its way through and above all such imperfect conceptions of the first principle. All such conceptions are implicitly religious. They imply as their ground the full conception of God. Hence the scientist is sane only as he becomes devout. But this criticism of the categories of ordinary science, making explicit its real ground,



is the work of philosophy proper. It is the needed corrective of scientific agnosticism.

Such a criticism of the categories of thought reaches a system of categories, with God as the implicit and the ultimate one. Religion grasps this without reflection. Philosophy has nothing further to do than to point out the necessity and rationality of the human spirit reaching and resting in communion with this personal First Principle or *Urgrund*. The Incarnation, as the perfect realization of this bond between God and man, and the extension of the Incarnation in history, are the essential *media* of both present religious and philosophical apprehension of this generic *Urgrund*. In neither case is it reached directly or intuitively.

Religion, then, as a part of man's consciousness, has its ultimate ground in the eternal and loving reason of the First Principle of all things. Faith itself, or the subjective side, is necessarily reduced to the action of the Divine Spirit in man. The consciousness of this actual vital relation, or reciprocal bond between God and man, is a primal and perennial fact, and the ultimate ground of religious certitude. Consciousness in man is implicitly a knowing of self with God (*con-scius*), and hence of knowing God in knowing self. This is the real significance of the ontological proof of the existence of God.

This bond is as real a relation as the causal relation. Indeed, it is often identified with this relation. Our heredity is from God, even though it be through lower forms of life, and our goal is also God, even though it be through imperfect manhood. The ground of religion we find, then, to be nothing extrinsic. It does not need a special handle in the way of external reasons. It is not founded upon nor sustained by the various alleged proofs. These may vary and pass away, but the activity continues as a necessary function of normal humanity. Religion will be found at the grave as well as at the cradle of man, because God is the immanent and transcendent essence of man.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "As the personality of man has its foundation in the personality of

God is the ultimate metaphysics of man, physical, mental and spiritual; the real substance; the continuously creative and sustaining power in His offspring. The *Benedicite* is the spontaneous expression of the whole groaning and rejoicing creation. If men should be so insensate as not to worship, "the stones would immediately cry out" an anthem of praise. The Psalmist's exclamation, "Thou hast beset me behind and before; . . . Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb," voices the consciousness of this ultimate metaphysics of all things physical. This *Urgrund* is creatively present before consciousness comes to raise the new-born man above the brutes. It begets religion as soon as consciousness of this power, in however low a form, appears, binding man back to (*re-ligare*) or causing him to review (*re-legere*) the fact of this primal relation. This consciousness varies in degree, strength, form and clearness of content. But it is the ground of the various grounds that we can offer as causal of this, which is itself the cause of them. Prophecy and miracle, the Bible, Church and reason also, are all its offspring, and authenticated by it, rather than the reverse.

But it is impossible that this fundamental fact of consciousness could be perfect at once. Religion, individual and racial, has a history. It begins as an immediate, indefinite apprehension of the relation in the subjective consciousness, but it expands and wins definite content with the growth of human consciousness in all spheres of experience. Thus subjective religion expands with new revelation and apprehension of it into objective forms of creed, cult and institution, which in turn educate and strengthen it. The same spontaneous consciousness of "the Power not ourselves" that led the childhood of the race to personify earth and sky, also led Plato and Clement and Hegel, through the mediation of Greek and Christian culture, to proclaim the essential and perennial kinship of man with God, in all the concrete experience of his life and institutions.

God, so the realization of personality brings man always nearer to God."—Mulford's *Republic of God*, p. 28.

There is more than an analogy, there is a real kinship between the psychological and objective development in the individual and the race. So we may trace a common outline for both. Indeed its development in the individual is only rendered possible through connection with a communal life. It is only by a false abstraction that the religion of the individual can be considered separately. Here as elsewhere the universal is prior to, and constitutive of, the individual. But this is not an abstract universal. It is the concrete organism of which he is a vital member.

One can say I believe (*credo*) only by first having joined with others in saying "we believe" (*πιστεύομεν*). The *I* always implies the *we*. It equals to-day the socialized and Christianized man of the twentieth century. I believe, because they—nineteen centuries of Christian kinsmen—have believed; and because we, the Universal Church, believe. Still, the subjective factor is central, and our socialized faith is *personal* communion with God. The individual has absorbed, and has been realized, not annihilated by, the universal. Religion remains to the end a personal relation to a Person, however much it has been nourished and quickened by the community. "I believe" now means the subjective personal self-affirmation, "the everlasting yea" of our Christianized consciousness.

But what do *I* believe? What is the definite content of the religious relation of the individual with God?

I believe the consense of the Christian consciousness in regard to God, man and the world. I believe "The Catholic Faith." We are far beyond the faith of childhood, of primitive man. The historic process of revelation and faith has rendered primitive immediate faith impossible and irrational. Both the act and the content have been endlessly mediated for us. Our consciousness of God has been enriched by that of a host of heroes of the faith, and by the cult and dogma of centuries of Christendom. Questions have been asked and answered for us before we were born. We have been born into the heritage of

these answered questions in the shape of the œcumenical creeds, though enough open questions still remain to make us heroes of faith, and our generation an age of faith.

But *I* believe. This heritage of the Christian faith is mine, only by the subjective personal activity of appropriation and realization. The Creeds are the records of a series of deep insights into the content of the Christian consciousness. The mastery of these is an ascent of the individual into the universal; something that cannot be ours by mere rote-learning, but only as we think over, verify, re-create or experience anew within ourselves. Subjective faith remains the most important element of our spiritual life. We cannot be merely passive recipients of the most opulent heritage. And yet the universal, the objective, rightly claims its place. We see this, also, when we ask further:

*Why* do I believe the Catholic faith? What renders it possible for me to make this my own personal faith? Why does *my* faith, my consciousness of relation with God, have this definite form and content? This form of faith, though personal, is not an immediate consciousness—a primitive unmediated revelation of God. It is not a matter of mere individual feeling or intuition. The *why* can only be answered by reading the whole history of his development, through the interaction of subjectivism and objectivism, of the self and its environment. A fair analysis of this process likewise leads back to God as its ultimate ground. The psychological and historical lead back to this metaphysical *Urgrund*. This stage of what we call Christian nurture is an indispensable phase in the development of both strength and definiteness of faith. It is here that the rationality of authoritative catechetical Church teaching and Christian influence of family and community are to be justified.

It is chiefly in this *what* and *why* of religion that we meet with grounds that *seem* to be extrinsic and accidental. The task, then, is to translate these grounds into rationality; to discover their place, that renders them necessary and rational ele-

ments of the organic process of the relation of God and man. This task includes the psychological study of the development of man in the social organism, and the historical study of the development of the social organism itself, and the reflective thought on the way back to the ultimate or metaphysical ground.

The faith, though once delivered, could never, from the condition of the case, even in Christianity, be "once for all delivered" to the individual or the community. This has had, is having, and will have a psychological history in both. *Faith* as an activity is forever the same, but its content, and the interpretation of this content, vary and develop with new conditions and culture. The life-giving Spirit inspires to some new form of practical religion, to meet new issues. The type of Christianity changes. Then the intellectual seers note this life, and modify the old theology so as to include it.

The question then is, whether the environment leading to change of both vital and creedal form of Christianity can be justified; whether, in theological language, we can see the hand of Providence; or, in the language of philosophy, whether we can discern the immanent logic or reason thus objectifying itself in rational forms? Or, if we restrict creedal form to the œcumenical symbols, and the normal ecclesiastical form to that of the primitive Church, the question is whether we can discern the rationality in the culture of Greece and Rome as well as in that of Judea, which makes "them legitimate ingredients in a catholic, complete Christianity." Can we, in other words, reach a philosophy of religion that justifies the multiform development of the two inseparable elements of religion—revelation and faith; God's seeking and man's finding; God's adhesion to man and man's adhesion to God? Such a philosophy of religion must be based upon a philosophy of history which must be simply a rational comprehension of empirical history. We thus indicate a work far beyond the limits of this present essay. We can do no more than note briefly the psychological forms through which religion passes in racial and individual experi-



ence, catching glimpses of the immanent rationality in the whole process.

## PART II.—THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FORMS OF RELIGION

We designate these three forms as (1) that of *Feeling*, (2) that of *Knowing* in its three phases of (a) *conception*, (b) *reflection* and (c) *comprehension*, and (3) that of *Willing*.

These are inseparable parts of consciousness, that we can only artificially separate for purpose of study. The *universal* element of thinking is more or less present in the *particular* element of feeling; and willing fuses them both into the concrete *individuality* of person or epoch. But in different ages and persons, and in the same person at different times, one or the other of these phases is more emphasized than the others. Hence religion varies in its psychological form.

(1). *Religion as Feeling*.—Religion exists primarily in the form of *feeling*. Its genesis belongs to the primitive depths in which the soul is just distinguishing itself from the great not-self about it. It is the first coming into consciousness of the pre-conscious fact that everyone is born of God. And this feeling is generally mediated by some religious instruction. The power behind and before is first felt, rather than known. This gives the sense of dependence, which always remains an integral part of religion. It may run through the gamut of reverence, fear, dismay and terror, or devil-worship. Or this power may be felt as a congenial and beneficent one, and the feeling run through the gamut of reverence, confidence, love, peace and ecstasy, or mysticism. Fear and confidence are the two marked elements in this phase of religion. There is no lack of certitude in it. The unreasoned certitude of feeling hallows any object, from a log of wood to the sky, from a Jupiter to a Jehovah. The fetich-worshiper has as much certitude as a Mariolater. All religions alike afford this certitude to their worshipers.

Historical illustrations of religions and of individuals in

this phase will occur to every one. So also will the names of Jacobi and Schleiermacher, who, in their reaction from vulgar rationalism, tried to make religion entirely a matter of feeling or of the heart. The certitude of this stage, I have said, is no measure of the worth of the contents of feeling. *De affectibus non est disputandum*. Schleiermacher went so far, we know, as to say that every religion or religious feeling was good and true; thus proposing a philosophy "as much contrary to revealed religion as to rational knowledge," and making anything like a communion of worshipers impossible. Each one has *his own* feeling, and this may be so emphasized as to lead to both sectarianism and atheism.

But, strictly speaking, this elementary phase of religion is quite indefinite as to what it feels. Until other elements enter in, there is no personal object given to worship. It represents the first conscious mysterious impulse toward the infinite and eternal. It represents those elements of reverence and confidence which made our Saviour promise the Kingdom of Heaven to children. But it is a phase into which other elements do speedily enter. The activity of the human spirit in relation with the Infinite Spirit impels it on to definite conceptions of God and content of feeling. Milk for babes, stronger nourishment for the growing child.

(2). *Religion as Knowing*.—The phase of knowing in religion.<sup>1</sup>

We distinguish here three phases of knowing: (a) *Conception*, (b) *Reflection*, and (c) *Comprehension*.

(a). *That of Conception*.—Mere feeling is rather an hypothetical stage of activity. Objects that produce feeling are soon named, or learned, or imagined. The child is soon initiated into definite religious conceptions which nourish his religious activity. This introduction into objective forms of belief and

<sup>1</sup>I may refer to my *Studies in Hegel's Philosophy of Religion*, Chap. IV, for a fuller and somewhat varied statement and criticism of this *second* phase.

worship is congenial with his developing intelligence. It helps him to name and to imagine the object of his religious feeling. The activity in this sphere is that of imagination. It is what we may call *mental* art—picture-thinking taking the place of picture-making. It is thought raising us out of sense. Here the object and the content of the religious feeling appear in forms corresponding to the degree of culture possessed. The new wine is first put into old bottles and then new bottles are formed out of the fragments of the bursted old ones.

This mental art of picture conceptions advances, bodying forth in less sensuous forms and in more abstract language the content of the religious feeling they help to quicken. The savage indulges in rude sensuous art, or combines it with rude mental art, personifying earth, air and sky. The Christian child is met in this phase of activity with Christian names and symbols, which help him to higher conceptions of what he feels blindly stirring in his soul. They do not create, but only help develop his religious life in more rational form. The more abstract form of conception, *i. e.*, dogma, is of little use here, unless it be accompanied with parable, legend and narrative. It is the time that religion is nourished on narrative-metaphor. The Bible contains a good proportion of such food for the young, and Christian history, especially in heroic and martyr days, furnishes more. But these should be supplemented by current religious literature, comparable with that furnished our young people by *St. Nicholas* and *The Youth's Companion*, instead of the autumnal *leaflets* and childish Sunday-school books.

By means of literature the Divine Educator co-works in developing and strengthening the bond between Himself and the growing child. Such narrative-metaphors are winged, and bear the young soul aloft to the very heart of God. It is the very sustenance for which young souls are hungry, and mere catechetical instruction in abstract theology is the veriest chaff to chafe and wither their aspirations, unless it be judiciously

concealed in fragrant flowers or ripe fruit. Give them the luscious grape, and not merely the seed.

Along with this goes the religious nurture, through public worship, Church festivals and ceremonies. The Christian year, followed out as dramatically as possible, is the best teacher of Christian truth. Besides, all this brings out the social side of religion, and helps to unite them with God through uniting with their fellows.

The catechetical and dogmatic period soon comes. The analyzing and comparing and generalizing activity begins its work in due time. Here metaphors harden into fact or are generalized into dogma. The winged metaphor will be clipped. The seed of the ripe fruit will be sought. The soul will crave definite and systematic truth. Subjective feeling and its imaginative vesture must find a basis in "Church Doctrine and Bible Truth." Systems of theology are often not much in advance of this period of abstract conception.

How best to conceive God, and how best represent the essential religious relation in systematic form, is the question at this stage, as the earlier picture-form becomes more abstract. This is the time for positive catechetical instruction, mingled with sufficient personal and rational persuasion to win assent. The proper ground of certitude here is a mingling of reason and authority. The authoritative teaching of the Church, properly presented, is God's method of further development of the bond between himself and his children. What great Christian teachers and what the Church in œcumenical councils have framed, come as the most vocal angels of the truth.

Such teaching is the media of the Holy Spirit co-working with the communal spirit. It represents the best expression of a large Christian consciousness through many centuries. It can and should be given with authority. Grounded upon the vital idea of religion, it has a rational authority to which every member, at this stage, will gladly and unconditionally submit. Such authoritative teaching is the craving of the soul, and so essential

to its religious life. Here such authority nourishes and quickens the religious life of the member, and submerges his individual conceits by giving him the one Lord, one faith and one baptism of the Universal Church. It is the time to go to school; the time when the mind craves teachers and longs for the wisdom that is beyond it. It craves to know *what* it ought to believe. It believes spontaneously on authority. It is also the time for Bible teaching, for Christian education through sacred literature.

The Bible is the Church's record of the historical revelation upon which it is founded. It *contains* the word of God in all its forms of literature. It is also the *vehicle* of revelation to the inquiring mind and longing heart. Protestants have made no mistake in reverting to it as life-giving and authoritative. It will continue to be both of these when the fullest and freest criticism shall have done its historical, psychological and literary work upon it. It will be found to yield a much more wholesome authority than under its uncriticised form of infallibility.

Many may stop contented with imagination on the standpoint of Church services, with their symbolism and ceremonial observances. Others, less æsthetic, stop on the more abstract form of dogma, or orthodox belief. Vulgar Romanism and Orthodoxy illustrate these two phases of *conception*, of sensuous and mental idolatry, both of which are normal phases in the religious process.

(b). Now comes the period of reflection, criticism and doubt. Reflection, indeed, forms a part of the activity which receives and forms definite religious conceptions and right belief. But it does not stop here. The normal activity of this phase impels on to a criticism of traditional and current conceptions on its way to a comprehension of the necessity of religion and an estimate of their comparative worth and real validity. Perfect representation or conception of God is intrinsically impossible, either in the form of pictured or of abstract symbol. Thought, in seeking this, has abstracted the essence of all its symbols or



precipitated them into definite and logical forms, and annexed reasons thereto. The reflective activity now impels to an examination of these forms, and of the reasons alleged for them. It is essentially critical and inevitably sceptical. It realizes the limitations and contradictions of attained conceptions. It then seeks to vindicate them by rationalistic investigations and evidences, only to multiply doubts. This is a necessary phase in the life of every ingenuously thoughtful Christian and Church. It is the work of the spirit criticising its own inadequate creation. It is the normal activity of the human spirit responsive to new revelations from the Divine Spirit. It is not an alien force, but the implicit infinite energizing through and above the inadequate forms of its hitherto realization in the finite spirit. Such criticism is the normal activity of the growing human spirit responsive to the Divine Spirit's new revelation, of which it may scarcely be conscious. The *advocatus diaboli* cannot prevent the canonization of such temporary doubt as sane and saintly. Dogma making and dogma sustaining, straining, breaking and re-formation are all the normal work of the same phase of thought, as understanding, on its way to the comprehension of the concrete rationality of Catholic symbols. It must reflect upon the various *musts* which have hitherto been controlling. It is the inherently just and normal demand of the human spirit to know the source and ground of these *musts*; to find a rationale of the authority of Bible, Church and reason.

The authority of Bible and Church may be rudely questioned by the reason that finally questions itself. Its aim is to see what it is in them that makes the Bible, Church and reason worthy authorities. Much of this criticism is directed against accidental, temporary and local conceptions of Christianity, which are inherently false to its spirit and purpose. It is the attempt to reconceive Christ under the changed conditions of modern science and thought. This task of reformation is laid upon many Christians and many ages. What we call revivals and reformations are only more emphatic workings of this

spirit in the Christian community. It is the dynamic of the Christian *Zeitgeist* itself, impelling to more comprehensive and vital knowledge of Christ, and should lead, on the one hand, to the throwing aside the accumulated rubbish of other periods, and, on the other hand, to the recovering and holding fast all that is good in previous forms of Christianity. From the mother's knee to the grave; from Bethlehem to the New Jerusalem, the Christian man and Church have this reflective, critical task to perform, in order to advance in Christian knowledge and life. It is a process of negating truth by affirming fuller truth.

Half of current scepticism comes from the pressing upon this generation outgrown conceptions and imperfect developments of the Gospel. To acknowledge frankly the necessary imperfection of progress is not to detract from the Gospel, but is to take away the edge of half the criticism. To attempt a readjustment of the letter to the spirit of Christianity; to reconceive Christianity, if you will, in terms of modern thought and imagery; to put the spirit in new forms; to abrogate the old letter in its fulfillment in the new—something like this is the problem set for the defender of the faith to-day. To acknowledge that Christianity has often been bound up with imperfect views of science, history, philosophy and politics; and with poor mechanical views of God, the world and man; and that to-day we are trying to free the spirit from these limitations and from the letter of theological and ecclesiastical dogmatism with which it has been unduly hampered, is to win sympathetic hearing and help, when otherwise we would meet with no vital response.

When this critical activity is abstract, it busies itself with finding grounds or reasons *pro* and *con*. It takes Christianity out of its concrete process and treats it abstractly as chiefly logical definitions. It proves and disproves and generally ends, unless it becomes concrete, in that negative form which should only be a mid station. This abstract criticism is known as that of common rationalism. The *Aufklärung*, *Eclaircisse-*

*ment* and *Rationalism* were the three national forms of the "age of reason." The eighteenth century should have sufficed for this narrow sort of mental work. But it continues even in this twentieth century in its senile form of agnosticism. It has ultimately doubted itself as the organ of truth.

It is only when the spirit's activity droops and stops its work at this abstract negative stage that doubt can be called sinful. It is then putting the absolute emphasis on subjective reason. It is then non-human, non-rational, a violation of the binding relation between God and man through historical and social media. Such absolute negativity of subjectivism is the very essence of the devil. No one is more to be pitied and no one is more to be dreaded than the man who has stuck fast in the mire of this standpoint. It is the natural penalty of thought abstracted from action and institution. It is the penalty of holding to Christianity as chiefly logical doctrine. For belief is rarely the outcome of formal logical procedure.

Much of the prevalent skepticism, however, is earnest, serious, wistful, and not Mephistophelian. It is within the church in which its martyrs have been nurtured. It is normal. Puritanism, in its day, and Anglo-Catholicism both doubted, protested and deformed as well as reformed the contemporary forms of faith and life. They appealed from a present to a higher conception of Christianity. The New Theology is but another illustration of the same activity. Faith is at the bottom of such work. It is the outworking of a higher conception of Christianity in the common Christian consciousness. The real ground of criticism is here the real ground of certitude in this transition epoch. It is faith's apprehension of a deeper and larger revelation breaking forth from fettered Bible, Church and reason. It is the spirit negating, in order to reform, its inadequate conceptions—often, indeed, only an effort to understand, that it may hold with stronger conviction its catholic heritage. In this is seen the infinite cunning of the guiding Spirit in spiritually minded men and in the Chris-

tian community. It is letting doubt have its way while using it as an instrument to accomplish higher aims. The normal end of such doubt is a comprehension of the natural and persistent co-relation and co-working of the Divine and human spirit in historic process, which explains and vindicates at comparative worth all previous conceptions and institutions.

This can, from the nature of the case, now come only from a genuine comprehension of the fact of the Incarnation and its historic effect in life, thought and institution. The religion of the Incarnation is the concrete form of reason that meets and fulfills the outworn abstract reason of this stage. Having proved to its satisfaction in agnosticism, that its own subjective ideals were not rational, it turns to the real to find the concrete objective rational. If it arrives at a comprehensive view, at a philosophy of history at all, it must find in the religion of the Incarnation the ripest and ultimate form of rationality. With Aristotle philosophy was a thoughtful comprehension of the encyclopædia of Greek life and experience; with Hegel it was the same speculative comprehension of the concrete experience of Christendom. That is the objective matter of this phase of the activity of thought which we have called

(c) Comprehension as the highest form of knowing. We are chiefly concerned with the mode of its activity, rather than with its contents. Its mode is that of insight, system, of correlation of all its relativities into a self-related organic process. It is thought looking behind and before all previous phases, and comprehending them as vital elements of a totality. It is concrete experience taking full account of itself, winging its flight from both earthly and airy abstractions. It is the incoming of the tidal wave, to flood the little pools left here and there, and to restore their continuity with the great ocean. It is an overcoming of previous standpoints in one that correlates and embraces them all in a system which is self-related. It rises to the conception of the necessity of self-consciousness,



which is perfect freedom. The heart of this system is the primal, persistent and vital bond between God and man, or religion. The result of its activity, as I have said, is conditioned by its subject-matter to-day. That subject-matter is the religion of the Incarnation; and philosophy only reaches its ultimate insight by a comprehension of that *which is*.

With many Christian thinkers the activity of the spirit does not persist unto this goal, where the wounds of reason are healed by reason; where the ground of authority is self-contained and self-necessitated through a profound synthesis of them all. Either dogma or doubt catches and holds them. They remain in either one or the other of these phases of common rationalism. And yet the spirit's demand and possibility is to make this *ein überwundener Standpunkt*. Often it is only implicitly overcome. It is overcome in that vital act of faith which we may call abbreviated knowledge. It is overcome practically, but not in the way of thought. Philosophy is only the making explicit for thought, what is contained in the ordinary Christian consciousness; only seeing the necessity of the real freedom in God's service; the realization of the bond between God and man contained in the consciousness of pardon, peace and communion with God through the incarnate Word. It is the discovery of the logic of the *Logos* in Christian experience and history. It accepts Christianity as the manifestation, the positive form of the absolute religion, affirming in its doctrine of the Incarnation the essential kinship of the human with the Divine Spirit. It is the only thing that will save those who have passed into the critical, doubting stage, from either a hopeless scepticism or an arbitrary submission to a non-intelligent power, which is the essence of superstition.

Unsophisticated piety has no need of this. But how little of current religion is unsophisticated. How thoroughly the rationalism of the understanding has laid hold upon the majority of Christians. They are asking and seeking earnestly



for reasons for their religion. Current apologetics, or external reasons, may temporarily satisfy many. But their inadequacy is also keenly realized by many others. They demand a sufficient reason, an adequate First Principle, which validates all proofs and authorities. Reflection, or the mere reasoning of the understanding, is incapable of reaching this. The only question then is, whether thought shall and can persist to its fruition, or whether the spirit shall faint in hopeless agnosticism, offering itself an unworthy sacrifice to either doubt or dogma. But here we must not neglect the value of the *practical reason*, the demand for religion in our nature, and the adequacy of current forms to meet this demand. We shall find that the theoretical can never reach its convincing result without inclusion of the practical reason.

In this work, thought passes in appreciative critical review all the categories which it has hitherto used in rationalizing experience, impelled onward to an absolute First Principle which will include and explain them all; that is, it seeks for a self-related and self-relating system, or a science of forms of thought, some of which Theology, as well as Science, uses in its work. It is restless till it rests in a sufficient First Principle, adequate to explain all experience. Being, substance, force, cause, co-relation, external finality, an extra-mundane Deity arbitrarily creating and destroying, are categories which, when used as first principles, give rise to positivism, pantheism, idealism, deism and agnosticism. But concrete religious experience to-day is such as to render all such interpretations inadequate. The abstract supernaturalism of much theology, as well as abstract mechanical naturalism, has failed to reach the adequate conception of God which makes creation, the Incarnation and restoration possible.

Thought is restless beyond these conceptions till it reaches the thought of an Absolute Self-consciousness who manifests Himself creatively in the finite world and man, binding them back to Himself. It declines any conception which makes na-

ture, man and God to be discordant and irreconcilable ideas. It is especially concerned to find the conception which binds man and God in the congenial bond which religion implies. Beginning with the individual finite mind, it passes through all the encompassing social circles, finding in the highest no place for "the religion of humanity." Religion demands a bond with a super-humanity.

Beginning with the conception of an abstract supra-mundane Deity, it passes through all theories of creation till it reaches the conception of the concrete absolute Self-consciousness that *must* create, and realize himself in his offspring. Abstract mechanical necessity, of course, is here entirely out of the question. It is the free necessity of his own concrete triune Personality which leads to creation and its culmination in the Incarnation. Such a First Principle contains in its very nature organic bond with his offspring.

And in the light of this alone is finite spirit, its nature, history and destiny, intelligible. Here religion is seen to be necessary. Its elements of revelation and faith are in the reciprocal process of the Divine Spirit to the human, and of the human spirit to the divine.

Philosophy does not create this conception of the First Principle out of nothing. It is not an abstract *a priori* conception. It seeks for the logical ultimate, and the chronological presupposition of all the other categories under which experience is alone possible for man. These categories or conditions of thinking can only be found by reflection upon actual experience. Philosophy is simply the science of these categories, implicit in the experience even of the most unreflecting; some of them becoming more explicit in the special sciences. It is not a knowledge of all things, but a comprehension of the underlying conditions of all knowledge in a system with an adequate concrete generic First Principle. Here its special insight is directed to the theological conditions of religious experience, or, in particular, of the content of the Christian

consciousness as to sin and redemption, or of alienated and of restored communion (religion) with God through Jesus Christ. In other words, it aims at comprehensive insight into the rationality of Christian experience, or at philosophical theology founded upon historical and dogmatic theology.

It does not destroy **or** transcend religion, which is the most vital realization of the bond between God and man. Religion is the highest, the complete practical, reconciliation, and is not destined to lose itself in philosophy. Philosophy does not set itself above religion, but only above partial and conflicting interpretations of its experience. It leads us to know for thought and in thought, as reasonable and true and holy, what religion is as life and experience. It validates this experience for thought. It gives the highest authority to religion, by demonstrating its absolute and not merely its psychological necessity. It reaches the ultimate ground of certitude, which was only implicit and unthought of in the stage of *feeling*.

It reaches, too, *certitude* as to objective religion. It sees the necessity and worth of all creeds and institutions as the outcome of the religious bond—the work of the spirit of man inspired by the Spirit of God in a course of divine education of the race. This spirit of comprehension is never envious. It often romanticizes, growing tender and reverent in its appreciation of the forms of the earlier stages in which it has been nourished. If it has passed thoroughly through the sceptical stage, it can never be ungenerous in its estimate of either dogma or doubt. Its insight into the truth of the heart of all religion; its ripe conviction of the necessary organic communion of God and man; its comprehension of the process of the Divine education. or its philosophy of history, enables it to find itself, to make itself at home at the humblest domestic altar as well as in the grandest cathedral, always holding the critical faculty in abeyance, as having been satisfied once for all. It thus gives the highest authority in religion, as

deduced from and implied in itself, as necessary. Holy and reverent is this spirit of insight, for it is the very Spirit of God which has bound the devil of doubt—a

“Part of that power understood,  
Which always wills the bad, and always works the good.”

It does not place itself above religion, again, because it is the child of religion. It reaches its conception of God only because religion has already realized the essential bond between God and man. In particular, it is the child of Christianity—the thoughtful comprehension of its own experience. This starts from the culmination of the historical manifestation of the bond between God and man. Jesus Christ manifested this bond perfectly. He was a man manifesting perfect absolute union with God. Rational truth can only be apprehended on condition of its existence in natural and secular form. It must be immanent in a historical process. The man Jesus did not primarily appeal to thought. He lived his practical life in the world. He came unto his own, and won them by his life. He became the fulfillment of the supernatural order implicit in all previous history, the consummation of the self-necessitated Divine act of creation in time. Here the hitherto immanent and constitutional co-working of God with man came to perfect manifestation. God became man because humanity was an essential phase of his own life. Here his perfect self-consciousness was manifested. Son of man and Son of God were manifested as congenial and inherent parts of the Divine Self-consciousness. Here was reached the axis of the world's history, or, for what concerns us at present, the axis of the world's *thought* about God and man; for we are still abstracting the concrete thought from the more concrete process of Christian life and institution.

Christian thought, which is modern thought, starts from the sensuous life of Christ and continues following the secular extension of this life in humanity. This has been the woof of which thought has been the warp in the concrete web of the

modern world. Previous philosophy had been an attempted comprehension of the relation of God and man as manifested in human experience. With the advent of Christ came new and fuller experience. It did not appeal primarily to thought. The practical experience of this life and its extension in the life of the Christian community came first. But thinking is an inherent human necessity which continued in the Christian community. It was self-necessitated to reflect upon and express in intellectual forms the content of its experience. The thought activity was new only as modified by its subject matter. Thoughtful men, men trained in philosophy, became Christians, and Christians became thoughtful. Hence Christian doctrines, and ultimately Christian creeds. These represent the most catholic thought of the intellectual aristocracy of the community, thinking upon the content of catholic experience. They claimed the guidance of the Holy Spirit gradually leading them into all truth. The Nicene symbol represents the highest and the most œcumenical expression of this catholic thought. This gives its authority to the completed Nicene symbol.

There are parts of this symbol which can have their proper authority only to those who can think themselves into its definitions and see how it states ultimate thought. Such thought should be the goal of all Christian thinking or theology. But all such knowledge is an approximate development toward, rather than an actual attainment. In the highest speculative thought and in the most œcumenical creed we still know only in part. But, for the understanding of the Nicene symbol, this speculative thought is necessary, as is also a knowledge of the whole history of the age which gave birth to it. Hence its general use in public worship may not be desirable. Repeating, parrot-like, forms of sound doctrine without any conception of their sense, is a pagan custom that we need not encourage. The Nicene symbol has its proper use in church-councils and clerical meetings. But perhaps this would be too



great a restriction. One can join with the great congregation of saints of the centuries in hymning this belief in the full divinity and the real manhood of Jesus Christ.

Our discussion implies a distinction between what is authoritative for comprehensive thought, and the much larger part of dogma which consists of metaphorical conceptions, partial theories and inadequate definitions which are local and transient—at best, only truth in the making. It is this portion, too, about which much of the anxious thought and controversy and doubt of our day is concerned. To this part belong theories of the inspiration of the Bible, of the atonement, of future punishment, of the method of the creation of nature and of man. *Must* I believe them? Do we believe them? Have they believed them? If so, which one of them, and why? Here the history of Christian doctrine can aid us greatly.

To the doubting and harassed Christian asking what *must* I believe as to many traditional and current conceptions, we may answer: Believe them only so far as, from a study of their history, you can see them to be necessary implications of the doctrine of the Incarnation. Take them at a relative rationality, as more or less harmonious with the general Christian sentiment.

The œcumenical creed is here a law of liberty. But it is also a law of *duty*. We not only may, but we *must* freely investigate the grounds and worth of all other conceptions. Biblical criticism and the theory of creation by evolution, the doctrines of the future life and of the atonement, the question of Church polity and ritual, all are *open* questions, in the solution of which we *must* take our part. The authoritative *must* is here that of free investigation, instead of slavish submission.

Protestantism repudiated the unethical authority of an unholy Church, but soon yielded the same sort of blind reverence to the Bible. The change was not wholly a mistake. It was the most spiritual and ethical attitude that could then be taken.

The evil grew out of the abuse to which all good things are subject. Superstition changed this living word into a dead letter. It was given the place assigned by pagans to their oracles, or by Mohammedans to the Koran. Bibliolatry became as real as Mariolatry. Orthodoxy was based upon a literal interpretation of an infallible oracle. Hence more than half the honest doubt of our day. Hence, too, the form of unevidencing evidences, serving only to increase scepticism.

But there is a reformation rapidly taking place in regard to the worth and authority of the Bible, almost as great as that accomplished by the Reformation as to the authority of the Church. Only this is an intellectual, while that was a moral revolt. It may take generations to bring men generally to a recognition of the rightful spiritual authority of the Bible, as it has taken centuries to turn the tide of appreciation in favor of recognizing the rightful and necessary authority of the Church.

Certainly it is not to be overlooked that a total revolution has taken place in our day in the conception of the method of revelation and inspiration. Our Bishops, in a late Pastoral Letter, acknowledge that the "advances made in Biblical research have added a holy splendor to the crown of devout scholarship," and mention both "shrinking superstition and irreverent self-will" as earth-born clouds that tend to obscure its holy light.

We can barely indicate the reformed conception of the Bible which is rapidly replacing the old one.

The Bible is literature. It is *sacred* literature. It is the "survival of the fittest" of the sacred literature of the Jews and of the early Christians. Like the creeds, it is the product of the Church, and at the same time the fountain and the norm of Christian life and doctrine. It is a record of revelation done into history; a record of the historical incarnation of the Son of God, set in a partial preparation for it, and in a partial result of its primitive extension. It thus *contains*

God's revelation. It is a vehicle of that revelation. It is itself a revelation of God to the student of it, and to the whole Church. It is not errorless, or infallible, or of equal value throughout. It is the Book of the Church to the Church and for the Church. Hence the Christian consciousness, rather than individuals, is the best interpreter of it. It also, in turn, produces and gives the norm of development to the life and doctrine of the Church. It is a living word, appealing to the mind and heart and conscience after criticism has done its utmost work upon it.

We still have the Bible. The Bible and the Bible only, is the Book of the Church, and the rule of faith. But we do not have—or we shall not, when critical study shall have finished its work—a word-book of equally valuable proof-texts, infallible *in toto et partibus*. Criticism demonstrates that the Bible is a record of divine revelation done into human history under the limitations of the mental and religious culture of the people of current times. All parts are not of equal value. Christ himself and his apostles criticised the morality and ritual of the Old Testament. Our Gospels are a fourfold transcription of inspired teaching in the Church of the first century. The Church was before the New Testament. It is the Church, founded and growing under the limitations of historical conditions, that gives us our authentic record of the life of Christ. Good Churchmen now generally say that the orthodox view of the Bible as a verbally infallible text-book has never been a doctrine of the Catholic Church. I believe that apologetics should frankly concede this, and thus free Christianity from the hundred criticisms that have force only as against such a theory—none whatever against the Bible as the Book of books.

So as to liberty and duty in regard to other *open* questions. The greatest theologians of Christendom have always maintained this. Only zealots and party politicians have flourished an authoritative must over Christians in such questions. But this duty demands that we shall try to get at the heart, at the

real significance of such conceptions and theories; to modestly seek to understand them before we dare call them irrational, after the short and easy method of many self-styled rationalists. Indeed, the historical method has largely replaced this negative rationalistic method even with unbelievers. They, too, thus find a relative justification for what they reject. It remains true, however, that we can even thus only accept many traditional conceptions and dogmas in a Pickwickian sense. Our belief in them will accord with Bishop Pearson's curiously elliptical definition of belief as "the assent to that which is credible as credible"—*i. e.*, belief is belief in that which is believable as believable.

But here we are still in the sphere of the liberty and duty of criticising inadequate metaphors and opinions. The task is how best to conceive or re-conceive Christianity through aid of past conceptions, and also through the aid of the changed conceptions furnished by modern science and culture. We cannot be chained to winged or to petrified metaphors of a past, whose whole material for imagination was very different from that of our times. We cannot accept them as authoritative, but must create the best we can, which will be as congenially authoritative to us as theirs were to them. More cannot be demanded. The modern ideal of knowledge is drawn on the canvas of a progressive education of the race. It is in accordance with this ideal that the most authoritative truth for one people or age may have but relative validity for another. Nor should the value of metaphor and abstract dogma as *media* of the divine revelation be overlooked in this criticism of their worth as scientific knowledge. Only we must not seek in them ultimate ground of authority. As we pass through self-compelled criticism from one conception to another, we are finding our real ground to be "the unity of identity and difference," of dogma and doubt. The new is better than the old only as it contains the old as a vital, though transmuted, element.

But even in the most concrete historical and philosophic view of truth we are still too abstract. We are studying Christianity as if it were chiefly a system of intellectual truth. We are abstracting the web from the woof, the *Logos* of the incarnation from the whole of its practical extension. We have acknowledged that Christianity must be done into history, into concrete life and institution, before it could be seen to be reason, just as the earthly life of Christ was essential to the seeing him as the *Logos*. Philosophy, then, must revert to this. Christianity is more than feeling or thinking. It is also deed. Theoretical cognition is not sufficient.

“ Grey, friend, is all theory; green  
Is the golden tree of life.”

(3). *Religion as Willing*.—We have, then, to notice the third form in which religion manifests itself—that of willing,

Comprehension has to embrace not only the grey form of right thinking, but also the green tree of golden fruit—the extension of the incarnation in the practical life of the social body. Religion is not merely the feeling or seeing the bond between God and man; it is also the determination of life by the bond. It is willing to be God-like. This is the building power, the realizing of the extension of the incarnation to the sanctifying the whole of secular life. It is the Rome-element constantly accompanying or preceding the other phases of religion. It posits, puts in concrete form the certitude of both feeling and thought. It is founded upon the rock of secular reality. It was present at the giving of the Law upon Sinai, in the formation of the Jewish Theocracy and building its temple, as it was in Rome becoming the imperial mistress of the secular world. This bed-rock certitude has never left itself without a witness and an organ in the form of institutions which have been the *media* of all our culture. This has been the activity of what Kant called the “*Practical Reason*,” or creative reason moulding the concrete into accordance with its



norm. It does the truth, and thus creates the forms which in turn nourish and educate it.

This Rome-element, or the "Practical Reason," is eternal, always placing itself above past history by making new history, but always vindicating past history by the new which that past alone makes possible. It may be called the petrifying element of religion. It catches and fixes in progressive stationary form the fleeting phase of feeling and the restless dialectic of thought, and yet ever uses the new and more ample materials they furnish for its work.

Man does what he thinks and feels. Man thinks what he does. Man is what he does. If we were compelled to choose between any one of these abstractions, we should say, Man is what he does. *The will is the man.* It is the concrete unity of all the elements of man. Any act of will is the expression of the whole man as he is at that time. It is his character, his law, his authority, his certitude. Doing, he is ever organizing his self, and ever rising on stepping-stones of past deeds to higher ones. Doing, he knows, the doctrine of God.

But man is social, and pre-eminently so in religion. The kingdom of heaven on earth has from the first been a social community. Its deed is its real creed. Hence the worth of what is called the moral argument for Christianity—its visible power in regenerating and softening mankind beyond all disquisitions of philosophers and all exhortations of moralists. This is also the truth in the argument that Christianity is a life of God in the soul of man, rather than a creed; an immanent regenerative power, a mystical presence that moves the homesick soul to find its home in God even in the ordinary routine of secular life. This too is the truth in the argument from personal experience of the members of this social body. Christianity *finds* them, meets their religious needs, nourishes their spiritual life, proves its adequacy to human need in all joyful and trying experiences. Its conceptions of life, of duty, of forgiveness, of eternal life—all the deeper moral and re-

ligious needs of the human heart—are met in the presentation of the Gospel by the Church to its members. This social religion is a religion of both inspiration and consolation. The Church meets and incorporates the new-born babe into its motherly bosom in holy baptism. Throughout life it lifts up its perpetual Eucharist to meet his needs, whether he be crying *De Profundis* or shouting *In Excelsis*. At death it transfers him from the home below to the home above—from the Church militant to the Church triumphant. The certitude of these blessings comes from experiencing them. It is the deed of Christ's life in the members of his social body.

But Christianity does not only realize itself in the practical life of its members, it also institutes itself in social organization. Here we approach perilous ground, or rather, we have to sail between the Scylla of an abstract universal and an abstract individual conception of the Church. What is the form of the Holy Catholic Church in which all Christians believe? We would fain escape from the strife of tongues by calling instituted Christianity the religious kingdom or the republic of God—the communion of saints on earth. That is the comprehensive truth. We limit ourselves to a few expository statements.

Our conception of the Church depends upon our conception of the First Principle. If God is conceived as abstract transcendence, the whole of religion necessarily receives a semi-mechanical form. Transcendence implies a dualism, a gulf, rather than a bond between God and man, that can only be bridged in a mechanical way. The incarnation and its extension alike suffer from this partial conception of God. Romanism is the standing illustration of the form of institution realized under this conception. High-Anglicanism is but its feebler counterfeit. This form has had, and still has, in some phases of civilization, its worth and relative justification. But to-day it is under the more genial congenial conception of the Divine immanence that we get the most comprehensive view

of the Kingdom of God as the whole of the faithful in every form of instituted Christianity.

There is no universal external corporate form that is inclusive. The Holy Catholic Church is like the Universal State, that federation of nations and Parliament of man to which individual states are subordinate and which is the world's tribunal, to pronounce and execute judgment upon them. Though Episcopacy be essential to the total corporate organization of Church and State, yet one must needs be stone-blind not to see churches standing without it to-day. The immanent Spirit was present in earlier forms, and now He is present in modern forms of Church and State, which have been inextricably interwoven throughout history. Protestant communions are also forms of instituted Christianity, closely in sympathy with modern states, which base their constitutions on the principles of freedom and respect for personality. Protestants necessarily regard the question of policy or constitution from a different point of view from that of Romanists. It is not an article of faith with them. The Romanist conceives of instituted Christianity as a mechanical, unethical form of authority. We recognize its institution as an ethical and historical process of the spirit immanent in Christian nations and communities. This springs from our conception of the First Principle as concrete Self-Consciousness, or Love, self-necessitated to create, and to relate Himself to his created offspring. It is a part of the philosophy of history which is quite modern, and yet Christian.

Romanism is one phase of this process. But modern Christendom has passed beyond Rome as ultimate. It is largely Teutonic and Anglo-Saxon. Still it is only a part of a process which must conserve the Greek and Roman element. The Greek element stands for philosophy or orthodoxy, the Roman for law or polity, and the Anglo-Saxon for free spirit or ethical personality. Creed and polity are permanent elements which Protestantism should conserve with its free

spirit without being seduced back to the stagnant orthodoxy of the Greek Church or to the terrible tyranny of Roman ecclesiasticism. This is our task. It has its dangers, but it is a duty. The Christian consciousness is not content with so many Protestant variations. It yearns for unity.

We are still in the sphere of history in the making, but take our part in it under the conception of the Divine immanence. This conception is monistic and organic. It is the category of comprehension or of totality, self-active and self-realizing. Its chief danger is that of overlooking differences, instead of reducing them to organic elements. But it is the conception which steers clear of all subjective individualism, and is only consistent with the social view of man in all spheres.

Thus it finds its ground of authority in the communal Christian consciousness, and strives to make this as oecumenical as possible. There are always relatively catholic institutions. These have been formative of every Christian person. Only in and through life in some form of them has he become a Christian. They have been God-given conditions to limit, in order to educe and realize, the individual. To be a member of some form of instituted Christianity is essential to one's being able to appreciate its rationality. It is from within such nurture that doubt may come to force him to wider conceptions or more catholic fellowship. Authority after authority, as teacher after teacher, may be transcended on the way to higher thought and life. But it must always be within some concrete form of Christian institution. The apprehension of its rationality comes after the experience of having our best-self educed by the process. The larger our fellowship, the larger authority and rationality we shall be able to recognize in this conditioning Christian organization.

Instituted Christianity needs and can have no grounds or evidence strictly external. It vindicates itself, as all organisms do. For comprehension, it is reason done into institution, the

sum total of the outcome of the consciousness of the vital bond between God and man in historic process. The Church, in every form, is a partial organization of this recognition. Submission to its authority in the most catholic form is the rational submergence of our empty individualism in the whole historic life of the great brotherhood. This yielding is neither childlike faith nor unmanly superstition. It is the yielding that should come from comprehensive insight into the vital and constitutive relation of a concrete whole to the single member. The historical is seen to be the constant accompaniment and educator of the psychological form of our faith, while both rest upon the metaphysical ground of the Divine adhesion to His own offspring in a course of education into full sonship.

To think ourselves into the creed, to form ourselves into the manners, to feel ourselves into the worship of the Church, is our rational duty. Such rational submission implies constant self-activity. This implies much doubt and much self-restraint. Hence it is vastly different from that servile, superstitious yielding to dogmatic external authority that rational Christians will never cease to protest against as uncatholic.

A person must always be at home with himself in the content of his self-consciousness in order to be rational. The creed and cult of the Church must be adopted and self-imposed through recognition of their constitutive influence in his own development. But this development he knows can never be in isolation. The rational for him is the social. He lives and moves and has his being in and through social relations. The rational "I believe" thus rests psychologically and historically upon a "we believe." The rational "we believe" rests upon the Christian consciousness of the community of which we are organic members. This consciousness rests upon the primal and perennial vital bond of God with his offspring. Thus the ultimate ground of authority and of certitude is God's adhesion to man. The secondary, or mediating ground of certitude for the individual, is the Church, which represents the adhesion of man to God, through consciousness of this bond.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE ULTIMATE GROUND OF AUTHORITY<sup>1</sup>

"The bottom's dun drop out, massa," said Sambo, apologetically, when he broke the teapot. Out of how many less earthen vessels in which truth comes to us—laws, codes, ideals, institutions, cults, and creeds—does the bottom seem to be dropping out to-day. Like Sambo's case, this is often due to our own unskillful handling. But it is also often due to a hasty judgment, that they even seem to be irremediably shattered. It is certainly needless to repeat the commonplace remarks as to the present unsettled condition as regards the till recently unquestioned authorities in human affairs. Nor is it necessary to more than refer to the *de profundis* clamor in some quarters for the "good old ways," and in others for "new ways" that shall be equally authoritative. Nor is it necessary to analyze fully this craving for infallible guidance, showing its weak ethical and spiritual character. Neither is it necessary to trace the course and results of "the age of criticism," "a criticism," as Kant said, "to which everything is obliged to submit," and to which, since his day, everything has, *nolens volens*, submitted. Nor is it necessary to trace the deflecting tendencies of a weak romanticism ready to fall back upon irrational elements of life, or of a weaker agnosticism which no longer seeks for a *ποῦ στῶ*, while the main stream is making for reconstruction, re-bottoming,—for criticised authorities that are still authorities.

We believe that this is the great healthy moral and intellectual stream of tendency to-day, despite the many appearances to the contrary. The human spirit has been criticising authorities to find their real basis. The work has been the work of an age

<sup>1</sup> Reprint of an article in *The Philosophical Rev.*, vol. I, No. 3.

of faith—of daring, soaring and profound faith. The scepticism and iconoclasm have only been seeming or partial. The work has been search after reality; “after bottom;” after the “rock all the way down;” after the authority of authorities. The real question has been, what is the concrete universal in which the visible particulars throb as members? what is the ultimate ground, source, basis, reason which authenticates—gives weight and worth to the various forms of authority which have been the educators of mankind?

On its intellectual side this work has been a critical regress upon the categories and ideals of reason, to what they necessarily presuppose. In this method modern science and philosophy are one, differing only in the degree and extent of their procedure. The ultimate work is being done by philosophy—the synoptic and synthetic work of spirit, building upon and following out the necessary work of science. On its ethical side, it has been a psychological and historical estimate of past and existing cults, codes and institutions to find their radical source and basis. “This part of the work is of much wider and nearer interest, but as it is never carried through without the aid of the philosophical work, we may place the philosophical first. That is, the task of finding the right of might, the ethical worth of code, creed, cult and institution can only be performed by the aid of philosophy. The function of philosophy is simply the comprehending of the old and the new as elements of a rational process. It differs *in toto* from the not yet obsolete rationalism of the eighteenth century, in that it has no *a priori* ideal, no fixed quantity and measure of the rational. To it, the real is the rational, however much it may contradict the subjective reason of the individual. It is a process, a movement of real logic through historic process of corporate man.

Again it seeks *the ground*, rather than for “grounds” as the old rationalism did. Grounds or reasons are external and artificial, and not inherent. But such bolstering up with external props inevitably leads to sophistry, or the inventing of reasons

that may seem to be valid. This is the resort of one who knows that he is defeated; that he has no real ground. Again, mere reasons are individualistic "points of view," and one person's are as good as another's. Ground, on the contrary, is universal and objective, and yet immanent. It is that which is creative of differences and constitutive unity. It is organic, catholic. It is the First Principle of all things. It is, in the most concrete word possible, God. But it is God immanent, the living Ground of all forms and phases of existence. That which distinguishes philosophy from the mere rationalism of both supernaturalism and naturalism is found in this conception of the immanence of the Ground in all phases of particularity. Rationalism never gets beyond a *Deus ex machina*. It bottoms all forms of faith and institution on that which is beyond. Its *jure divino* creeds, cults, decalogues, politics, are all based upon a transcendent mechanical First Principle. It never rises to a *res completa*. It always deals with parts without living organic link.

With such forms criticism easily plays havoc. But philosophy sees these same forms as living parts of one self-evolving, self-realizing Idea, of the Absolute Unity which differentiates or particularizes itself, and yet is ever in and above all its particulars. Form and image may change, but the ever-living spirit persists through all change—the correlated and conserved force of the universe. Philosophy thus gives another *jure divino* basis to all the ever-changing forms of life, creed, code and institution. It sees that the actual is the relatively rational, not because any *status quo* is ultimate, but because it is a progressive manifestation of the reason that is at the heart of all that is.

But when we thus dogmatically announce this Ultimate Ground, we find ourselves asking for reasons for it. To attempt to give *external* reasons, would be to fall back into that unresolved dualism of rationalism, which leads ultimately to agnosticism. For such a Ground, no sign or reason can be given, except that which is self-contained and self-authenticat-

ing. How, then, let us ask, does God manifest Himself as the ground of all authority in the most comprehensive view of reality, *i. e.*, philosophy?

Philosophy is interpretative of phenomenal reality. It is not *a priori*, but strictly inductive. Without the woof of experience it is as empty as experience without its warp is blind and chaotic. The laws which science discovers are inductive hypotheses. So we may say, at the risk of being misunderstood, that the God of Philosophy is an inductive and yet necessary hypothesis. But how does it reach it? A critical estimate of the "arguments for the existence of God" would be in order here, but out of proportion. Where then shall we begin? Rather where shall we not begin? For every bit of experience and every act of mind and will implicitly contain this First Principle. Let us begin with the simplest form of our consciousness and rise into that self-consciousness which is the magic and universally elastic and yet adamant circle which embraces all reality. Even Professor Huxley makes the confession for science "that all the phenomena of nature are, in their ultimate analysis, known to us only as facts of consciousness."

(a) The simplest phase of consciousness is that of indefinite that-ness which becomes qualified into something distinct and separate from the self. Qualified sensations run into masses. We have a *quantity* of existence. Here we are in the realm of common sense, which sees definite isolated things. But it sees them in time and space under the forms of quantity. If we stop at this stage we only have a lot of separate things, which may be analyzed into a chaos of atoms in an empty void. But the mind which has already thrown its unifying power over isolated transient sensations, to give us these things and atoms and the void, will not stop here.

(b) After quantifying sensations in definite aggregates, it goes on to *qualify* and then to distinguish, relate and correlate them. Here the environing *relations* become the chief object of interest. Nothing in the world is single. Endless series of

relations embrace and constitute anew what was at first separate and distinct. Environment is the fate which submerges isolated things. These relationing conditions are named ground, force law, substance and properties, cause and effect, and finally reciprocity. These are categories or thought-forms through which the mind knows things together. They are the categories which science uses in its work of correlating endlessly diverse phenomena into system. Each thing is, only as it is determined by others as its cause. It is the realm of impersonal law, or of pantheistic matter, substance or force.

(c) But this is not ultimate. Thought still demands an *Urgrund* of this realm of relations. It demands a lawgiver for the law. It passes from causality to *causa sui*. That is, relativity demands *self*-relation. An effect implies a self-separation in the cause—a transference of energy to its own created object. Reciprocity is the bridge by which thought makes this transition. The cause is seen to be as dependent upon its effect as the reverse. It first becomes a cause in its effect. Without this it would be causeless. Thus cause and effect have essential kinship, mutually begetting each other. They form one total, dividing itself off from itself and yet finding itself in both. Each is an *alter ego* begotten by the other, forming a totality of infinite connection with self, freely positing all differences and yet realizing only itself in them. It is always and everywhere the cause only of itself; that is, it is free self-activity. Self-separation is the essential presupposition or ground of causality.

But the infinite regress of cause and effect is futile. The totality of conditions must be self-sufficient, self-moving, self-separating and self-relating, for outside of the totality there can be nothing causal. Hence changes in the totality of conditions are spontaneous or self-determined. Thus the categories of essence, which modern science uses, issue inductively in self-activity, self-relation, freedom and personality—the ultimate and constitutive presupposition underlying all objects of sense and all forces, laws and systems of science.



But as self-activity is not impersonal activity, neither can it be solitary activity. Self-consciousness is never an abstract, unitary activity. It is always constituted of trinal relations—subject, object and subject-object. *Causa sui* begets eternally a second free self-activity as its own object. This again is creative in its self-recognition. Knowing is one with willing. In knowing himself, he creates a third equal one, in which the first also knows himself. The Christian doctrine of the Holy Trinity is the ultimate speculative conception of the First Principle, knowing, willing, loving. The perfect life of this true totality is a life of self-constituted relationships. It is timeless and spaceless. Knowing eternally creates its object of knowledge; willing, its product; and loving, its lover. In this trinity of relationship we may see love as the central constitutive ground, the absolute form of self-activity. The world and man are its manifestation in time and space. The poet Dante saw how even hell was the creation of this “primal love” (Canto III, 6).

Common sense inventories things; science inventories relations; and philosophy explains both of these inventories by the creative energy of the totality, or perfect self-consciousness.

But this *ascensio mentis ad Deum* is, I have said, an inductive process, a critical regress to the logical condition of all existence. It is thought's description of heaven, earth and hell, so far as these have come within the magic realm of self-conscious experience. It is the concrete system of the fossilized intelligence of man in all departments of his experience. It is an inductive discovery and unification of the categories through which men know sensations, things, force, laws, self-activity. These types of thought came through empirical experience. Rather they made the experience which reveals them. Each type has embalmed the experience of generations. The experience of primeval men, of Oriental, Jewish, Greek, Roman, and Christian man, is the woof, through the struggle to interpret which, this warp of thought comes into human consciousness.

It is the universal constitutive of all particulars which thought has labored at interpreting.

The various names which thought has at various epochs given to this universal ground, are called categories. The ultimate one of God, as concrete or Triune Personality, is reached only by thought thinking Christian experience. Philosophy without experience is empty, without progressive experience it is dead. It progresses with experience. Hence it cannot be the same after Christ that it was before Christ. To-day it must give a synopsis of the modern or Christian consciousness. The lowest category or conception of the universal ground was, perhaps, spatially the highest,—*i. e.*, the Vedic Sky. This was an induction. So, too, was the Oriental conception of blank Being or Brahm, as well as the more modern ones of matter, substance, force. Thought carries dogmatically upon one until new experience shows its inadequacy. Advance is made through new, or newly comprehended, revelations of the First Principle in the web of experience. This implies that the thinking man has lived through and above all non-theistic, and all abstract theistic theories, the unsatisfactoriness of each successive one forcing thought to seek the truth just beyond, and yet implied in it, till concrete Personality is reached and is seen to be the eternal presupposition lying back of and giving comparative worth to each imperfect one, and in which they are all abrogated and fulfilled.

We may put the whole of philosophy in one sentence adapted from Augustine: "Thou hast made our *minds* for Thee, O God, and they are restless till they rest in Thee." This is the goal of catholic philosophy, of corporate reason, which vindicates all the transcended steps of its progress to this ultimate ground of thought. This process of philosophy is just the reverse of an abstract method. The God of thought is the most concrete, catholic Real, reached not by a process of abstraction from particulars to a blank universal, but by a process of interpretation, an inclusion of particulars and their

environment—a totality in which all other categories live and move and have their being.

But if this is such a concrete General, it must show itself capable of yielding in turn that from which it has been inducted. If this is the interpretation of experience, it must also be its interpreter. If this is the ultimate standpoint of reason, it must be evident how it bottoms all that is. It must explain all thoughts and things as parts of a great process of creation, or of the self-revelation of God. It is not sufficient to say that "the real is the rational," if by the real we mean only a sterile universal. This would be of less worth than the deistic *Deus ex machina*. This First Principle must show itself as the metaphysics (*μετά*, in the midst of) of nature, man, and his institutions

This reverse process of tracing the genesis and relative validity of the particulars from this concrete Reality is as difficult as it is necessary. Its relation to the current authority of physical and ethical law, State, Church, Bible, spirit of peoples, prophets and lawgivers, is not immediately evident. How does it bottom them, render them relatively *jure divino*? Only a mere indication of the principle and method of this work, and of the validity can be given.

The crucial point is the transition from the perfect First Principle to an imperfect world, *i. e.*, to creation. Here the creation *ex nihilo* and the emanation theories are the Scylla and Charybdis. From neither of them can thought pass to an adequate First Principle; nor, on the other hand, can they mediate between It and creation. They are unworthy of the God of philosophy. To-day there is an attempt to revive a spiritualized form of the primordial ὕλη upon which the Demiurge worked. Started anew by Jacob Boehme, this theosophic speculation of a φύσις—an eternal non-material substance in God as the source of creation—is forcing itself into the systems of Christian theologians.<sup>1</sup> This is a commendable

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the admirable work of the Rev. Dr. J. Steinfart Kedney: *Christian Doctrine Harmonized*.

attempt to avoid the rocks and the whirlpool. But it is not, and cannot be, ultimate till the *φύσις* is wholly resolved and transmuted in the Divine Glory. This alone can save it from the maintenance of the eternity of the finite, or of matter, and make creation to be a form of free self-activity of the Divine. Poetic, religious and symbolic forms cannot pass for the pure, *i. e.*, concrete, thought, which philosophy demands.

Now, the First Principle reached by philosophy and stated in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity can be seen as self-sufficient, as the absolute and as sufficient for creation as a free process of self-activity—the creation going forth in imperfect form *in order* to return in perfect form; *i. e.*, a process in time and space with the one sole final purpose of the evolution and education of rational immortal souls into a perfect Kingdom of God. The world as such is not divine, but a procession which includes its return to the Divine. That is, the First Principle yields a rational and teleological basis and view of creation and its history. The final cause is the true first cause.

Creation in all its present forms and in its totality is imperfect. *Respice finem* is philosophy's antidote to doubt, awakened by imperfect and transitory forms of life and creed. Reason is immanent in and governs the world, but the world as it is, is not equal to, does not exhaust Reason—the Totality. "Anthropo-cosmic theism" is the valid interpretation of the creation, still creation is not exhaustive of the Divine. It contains all degrees of *unreason* as well as of reason. It is not, even as a totality, the perfect, but a process towards the perfect. Nothing ultimate or infallible can be looked for in this temporal process, nor, on the other hand, can it be looked at apart from its ultimate and essential destiny. There may be three false verdicts as to creation: all things are divine; nothing is divine; some things are divine. The last has been the contention of abstract supernaturalists. They pervert the Church doctrine of the God-man, into an assertion that the man Jesus, in his state of humiliation (*kenosis*), was only

veiled Deity and deny that he "increased in wisdom and stature" to his full-orbed Divinity at the Ascension. Much of the lately prevalent orthodoxy has run through the gamut of excluded heresies, especially those of Doketism and Monophysitism.

Again, it has applied its abstract canon to the Bible and the Church, seeking to take them out of the realm of the historic process; thus going as wide of the mark as those who find no visible historical continuity in the Church, and no record of authoritative revelation in the Bible.

Such abstract views are accountable for much of current scepticism. The state is *jure divino*. "There is no power (civil), but of God," yet Christians have long since ceased to stamp any one form as ultimate. The Church is *jure divino*, yet even with pulse-beat of historical continuity it can claim finality in no one form. The Church is never wholly holy, and never wholly whole or catholic. It is expanding into catholicity, growing up into the holiness of its Holy Spirit. So, too, of prophets, lawgivers, the moral sentiment of the community, the fixed laws of a social state—none of these are ever ultimate or infallible (ecclesiastical anathema, or civil proscription to the contrary), because they are only parts of a great process that is moving on, in, and through temporal, transitory forms; returning them in enriched educated form whence they sprang. Nothing finite can be ultimate, nor can it be at all without being in some way a member of the larger process towards the ultimate.

Pantheism, which identifies the immediate actual forms of existence with the divine, is even more unphilosophical than the supernatural form of rationalism, which says that only some things are divine. This is, at least, semi-critical, while pantheism is wholly uncritical.

Philosophy, however, differs from both of these in affirming a progressive realization of rationality in the world-process. It claims to see enough of the process to have caught its



whence and whither, and thus to have an instrument of criticism and a canon of valuation. Briefly stated it is this: the First Principle of the Universe is Personality, or thinking, loving will, going forth in a temporal process with the teleological aim of returning with a whole commonwealth of souls educated into his own image. The First Principle is Reason, and the temporal process is toward Reason, each phase manifesting some phase of rationality. The world of human history manifests this rationality no less, nay more, than the world of natural history. History is neither an immediate work of God, nor is it an apostasy from God. It is a process from and to God, a process of the education of man into rationality, or into the concrete freedom of the Sons of God in his kingdom. On God's side it manifests his Providence; on man's side, it is humanity *making itself*, or coming to a practical consciousness of its rational freedom. Enough of this has been attained, to give us an estimate of the past and a forecast of the future. Man is what he now is, by virtue of those authoritative beliefs and institutions, religious and political, which have held society together and educated it. Some of them have been very rudimentary teachings of that essential intelligence that constitutes the essence and the destiny of man. God "hath determined the times before appointed," the organic epochs of peoples and eras, the ganglionic centres, which sum up and express the spirit, the rationality of various times and peoples.

This of course implies an historical and psychological study of the origin and growth of all human institutions. But it also implies a philosophical or teleological estimate of all human history. Our First Principle interprets it as the reason of humanity, organizing and instituting its needs and ideals in its onward stumbling to and fro between its own true character and its passing caricature. History is thus interpreted as a series of intelligent events, a progressive education of the rationality of man in his institutions, in state, art and religion.

Wherever two or three are met together to consult about and devise a *common* good; and wherever this common good widens in extent and deepens in quality, there is seen the implicit spirit of rationality, outerring itself.

As in nature nothing is without interest, significance, rationality to the student of science, so in human history, no creed, cult, or institution is without interest and significance. As the student of nature traces the increase of rationality from the lowest form of inorganic matter up to its most organic form in man, so does the student of philosophy trace the increase of this rationality from the lowest form of ethical and religious life, up to its most organic, fulfilled form in the Incarnation and its extension in the life of the world. Up to the Christ, was the course of the world's history B. C. Up into Christ, has been its course through all the centuries A. D. In Christ was the perfect revelation of the character of the First Principle, the goal and the starting-point of all true human history. Throughout the process this final cause dominates all empirical causes, using them only as plastic materials for its own self-formation. The merely historical method may easily invalidate any dogmatic theory of innate ideas and conscience, or any mechanically *jure divino* origin of human institutions, but the philosophical method easily recovers them for the divine world-order.

Man may be, historically, derived from the beasts, but he is, none the less, more than a beast; more than the mere sum of antecedent empirical conditions of his genesis out of beasts or "out of the dust of the ground." Even science gives up the task of explaining the higher by the lower form, and philosophy finds in self-consciousness the ultimate explanation of nature.

Nor, on the other hand, is the real value of the family, the State and the Church, to be found in their being traced back to some mysterious *ab extra* divine origin. Their value at any time consists in their adequacy to educate and express the

highest current and nascent forms of human well-being or concrete freedom. This end is their real beginning. Ἡ δὲ φύσις τέλος ἐστί. Their phase of rationality is the measure of their worth, and the measure of temporal rationality is the idea of concrete corporate freedom of spirit in these institutions.

The very faculty of knowledge which accomplishes the results of scientific history implies, further, an eternal Self-Consciousness, eternally self-realized, and yet eternally realizing itself in temporal conditions. Nothing exists rationally except for self-consciousness, and all things only for an eternal Self-Consciousness. The theory of knowledge, then, is ultimate for man in his study and his estimation of all that is. The *knowledge* of all temporal conditions, can never itself be a part or product of these conditions, as they are only objects of this knowledge. It is to this spiritual principle, then, to which we must refer for parentage, all the institutions, usages, social codes and aspirations, through which man has become so far rationalized. The real at any time and place is the relatively rational for that time and place, but the end is not yet. The Mosaic economy for the Jews was one phase of this rationality. That of the Roman law was another phase, even for Christians. Even when Nero was its minister, St. Paul could tell Christians, "There is no power but of God," and "he is the minister of God to thee for good."

But this is far from identifying the actual at any time with the rational, the good. The concrete principle forbids the glorification of any *status quo*, and compels historical perspective. It sees only a series of increasingly adequate manifestations and vehicles of the true spirit of man. The highest form to-day is given for us in all the distinctively Christian institutions. Other objective forms of rationality are not now the φύσις of man. Other spirit of rationality can never be for man, however much its outward forms may change, as man is educated "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ"—the eternal Reason, the goal and the starting-

point of man's true history. This is the bed-rock, the bottom, the immanent formative and life-sustaining power in all the current phases of educative authority. Illustrative application of this ultimate bottom of all authority, may be made to current forms of social, civil and religious authorities, in and through which man attains and exercises true freedom.

## APPENDIX

### NOTE 1<sup>1</sup>

The other school of interpretation, which we have mentioned, is responsible for this suspicion, which has cost us an appalling price, among other things the good-will of Protestantism and the opportunity to gain a friendly hearing for the wise and temperate proposals of the House of Bishops. In truth that party does not desire either of these. It is self-labeled *Catholic*. It holds the Episcopate in an *unhistorical* and sacerdotal spirit. It obscures it by enveloping it with a certain *theory* of the apostolical succession, making it a necessary channel for the grace of valid ministry and sacraments.<sup>2</sup> Churchmen of that party hold it in an unhistorical spirit, because they hold it in a form "locally adapted" not to the present living Christianity of this country, but to that of the middle-ages, as the costume of a barbarian child might be "locally adapted" to the needs of a full-grown man of this generation and culture. It looks upon Protestant Christianity as a failure or a chaos, as Carlyle's minnow in his little creek might upon the ocean-tides and periodic currents, and has but one short and easy recipe for its salvation—"Hear the Church." Too often this means only the Church in their own person, or parish, or party.

It denies that the protesting, differentiating dialectic of the life of a Christian commonwealth is as much the work of the Holy Spirit as the conservative and synthetic element. It takes a part for the whole. It stands only for the arrested growth of the organization at an earlier period. But history is not a mere dead past. It is a living present in

<sup>1</sup> Extract from appendix to author's *Studies in Hegel's Philosophy of Religion*, p. 325.

<sup>2</sup> Their theory or doctrine of apostolical succession is thus stated by Froude:

"1. The participation of the body and blood of Christ is *essential* to the maintenance of Christian life and hope in each individual. 2. It is conveyed to individual Christians *only* by the hands of the successors of the apostles and their delegates. The successors of the apostles are those who are descended in a direct line from them by the imposition of hands; and the delegates of these are the respective presbyters whom each has commissioned" (quoted by Rev. John. J. McElhinney, *The doctrine of the Church*, p. 359). Again (from Tract No. LII); "In the judgment of the Church, the Eucharist, administered without apostolical commission, may, to pious minds, be a very edifying ceremony; but it is not that blessed thing which our Saviour graciously meant it to be; it is not 'verily and indeed taking and receiving' the body and blood of him, our Incarnate Lord" (*ibid.*).



organic connection with a living past, that only becomes dead when *locally unadapted*. The same fact is held by both schools. But it is interpreted by the two with both a different historical and philosophical spirit. The one says the old must be transmuted into the new; the other says that the new is bad and the old is good. The latter sacrifices the Kingdom of God to the Church as an end. To be a good churchman is more than to be a good Christian. They give it a sanctity above and apart from its intrinsic excellence as a means to the welfare of the whole estate of Christ's Church militant. So as to the value placed upon Church authority and holy orders. It calls "orders" a sacrament, though our article (XXV) denies it this grace. Without bishops no priest, without priest no sacraments, and so no salvation except in some way of irregular, unauthorized, uncovenanted Divine mercy. It travesties *presbyter* into *priest*, and arrogates to itself the grandest title in God's universe "Catholic." Fortunately for formal truth, it limits this by calling itself the Catholic *party*. It declines discussion, and deals in emphatic assertion. Its devout thanks to the Lord for the unity of the Church are drowned by its constant litany and commination service for the one mortal sin of schism from a dead past. A few local directions given to local churches in the apostolical age are magnified into a whole book of Leviticus. St. Paul's "cloak" is translated "Eucharistic vestment," and his "parchments" "liturgy." Apist is developing into papist. Miraculous powers, uninterrupted descent, infallible authority, fixed dogmas, and ready anathemas—all are of Rome, Romish.

As Archbishop Whately said: "It is curious to observe how common it is for any sect or party to assume a title indicative of the very excellence in which they are especially deficient, or strongly condemnatory of the very errors with which they are especially chargeable. The phrase 'catholic' is most commonly in the mouths of those who are the most limited and *exclusive* in their views, and who seek to shut out the largest number of Christian communities from the gospel covenant. 'Schism,' again, is by none more loudly reprobated than by those who are not only the immediate authors of schism, but the advocates of principles tending to generate and perpetuate schisms without end. And 'Church principles'—'High Church principles'—are the favorite terms of those who go the farthest in subverting all these" (The Kingdom of Christ Delineated, p. 125). There can be no more wicked form of schism than that which thus binds the oracles of God where he has not Himself bound them. And this theory is called that of *organic unity*, while it unfrocks the whole body of non-Episcopally ordained ministers, denying the validity of the orders and sacraments of those who have been foremost, under God's uncovenanted mercy, in spreading the prin-

ciples and doctrines and spirit of Christ among men. Better call it the inorganic unity of petrification. Its spirit is really Donatistic, not churchly. Its Church history can all be put in one small volume, a portable but pitiable commentary on the Saviour's promise and power of fulfillment. "History is heresy," said a doctor of the Roman communion, which puts herself above history, or only takes out her own from the great current. To it Christ has been defeated by anti-Christ. Certain it is that the great mass of American Christians will respond to either Roman or Anglo-Roman assertion that "history is heresy" in the words of St. Paul: "After the way they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers" (Acts xxiv, 14). The Romish interpretation given to the Church by this party can never be accepted by American Christianity. For it ignores all the fine spiritual life and thought of the Protestant centuries, the outcome of the deepest mental and spiritual struggles and life of any age of Christendom. It is reactionary, not progressive—hierarchical, not democratic—priestly rather than prophetic and ethical. It aims at once more subjecting the consciences of the laity to the direction of priests through the confessional, practically making it obligatory for confirmation and the Holy Communion. It imitates the Roman costume and cult and dialect, often out-Romaning the Romans. It is a party, rather than a school of thought, bent upon propagating and proselytizing. It is instant in season and out of season in circulating its little reasons for being a churchman of its type. It has its *index librorum prohibitorum*. With impudent assumption it puts the Church's *imprimatur* upon its pseudo-Catholic tracts, manuals, and books of devotion and of doctrine. Its peculiar horror is sectarianism, and its chief mortal sin is schism. Protestantism is "the man of sin." Shame alone forbids me giving the name of the bishop who could write thus: "The question with the Protestant is not so much what you *affirm*, but what do you deny; and the more he denies and the less he affirms, the better Protestant is he. He is not expected to give much heed to the Lord's Prayer or the Ten Commandments, and for the most part he does not disappoint the expectation." It is but a sorry *eirenicon* that this party can attempt with the great rich current of American Christianity. If the offer of the historic Episcopate in their interpretation of its significance could be accepted, it would only lead to an American Church that would need to repent in sackcloth and ashes for its spiritual apostasy from Christ, and pray to be speedily baptized with the fiery baptism of a Reformation.

Certainly a polemical protest against the interpretation of the historic Episcopate by this very polemical party, is essential to our holding it

forth as an *eirenicon* to our brethren of the great Christian communions of America. This protest is necessary, because this party, though small, is very noisily aggressive. It is the *polemical* party in the Church, loudly and constantly protestant against the Protestantism of its own communion. It thus greatly *misrepresents* us to others. For, measured by the number and dogmatism of its words, it might well be considered as representing the dominant view of our Church. In the interest of internal peace, the greatest possible latitude has been allowed to this party. It has been protected in its youth, but, as it gains strength, it turns again only to rend those who have protected it, and seeks to make its liberty the tyranny of the whole Church. . . . In its beginning, this party sprang from a real revival of religion. It had then, and has always had, its devout scholars, saintly men, and genuine philanthropists. It has done much for our own Church in infusing a reverent devotion into worship, and has done a noble work of Christian love among the poor. But this does not commend the *system*. The same lofty praise due to many of them is also justly accorded to very many of the Jesuits. For its many holy men and their self-sacrificing labors of love, I have all honor and thankfulness. For much that they have done to adorn "the Bride of Christ," for the "gold, silver, and precious stones" they have built upon the one foundation, I have due appreciation. But for the *theory*, and for many of its *practical* as well as *logical* results—for its "wood, hay, and stubble"—I have only sorrow and shame.

This retrogressive party is not a large one. While many of its exponents are too devout and holy to put it forth in the obnoxious form described, it is yet as a party extremely pronounced and polemical in its assertion of the sacerdotal character of the ministry. It is a clerical party. It embraces a few laymen. Neither can it be said that the other school of thought is dominant in the Church, just in the form described. The conservative High Churchmen, perhaps, form the bulk of our communion. These hold to episcopacy as essential to the very *being* of a visible Church, without giving it the obnoxious sacerdotal interpretation. For the most part, they also hold it in the true historical spirit described.

The attempt by the sacerdotal party to capture this large element wholesale bade fair of success but recently. It has failed and will fail. For that school stands firmly loyal to the historical Reformation of the Church of England. Its wider perspective, its larger practical wisdom and sympathy with the work of the Spirit in the modern world, will prevent its members accepting mediæval sacerdotalism as essentially connected with their view of the Episcopate. It is freedom from this that makes them at one with the Evangelical and Broad Church schools in their desire "to enter into friendly conference with all or any Christian

bodies seeking the organic unity of the Church." It is the *sacerdotal system* connected with the mediæval theory of the Episcopate as the *necessary* channel of divine grace, instead of the primitive and reformation view of it as the best mode of government, that forms the line of radical demarkation between parties in our Church. Between these two there is as yet no tenable middle ground. The former is not, and the latter is, Primitive, Reformed, Anglican and American.

This question of our interpretation of the "historic Episcopate" is a most practical one. It is the question of the relation of the Protestant Episcopal Church to the other Protestant Churches of America. The *historic fact* may be interpreted into an *unhistorical* and *unchristian* theory; or it may be so interpreted as to be the form for unifying in external organization the large spiritual unity already existing between the different churches of this country. It may be interpreted so as to lead us to stretch out our hands to the *unholy* Orthodox Greek Church, that scarcely awakes sufficiently from its torpid slumber to recognize our infantile presence; or to beckon to Rome—to the great, wily, comprehensive, absolute master of this theory—as Mohammed beckoned to the mountain. Or it may be interpreted so broadly, reasonably, practically, and philosophically in the Spirit of Christ and of the historic method, that we shall not stretch out our hands in vain to our sister churches of America. No age and no form of ecclesiastical institution are perfect or lasting, and yet the Holy Spirit is the diversifying and unifying principle of them all. Holding fast in the spirit of the historico-philosophical and practical method, all that is true in the past in vital connection with all that is good in the present, we need no arrogant pretension of absorbing all into an Anglican Church with its fully developed polity and liturgical worship, in order to be the leader of broken American Christendom into the higher catholicity of the American Church of the future.

The vision of and the sure confidence in the One Holy Catholic Church as realized, or as being realized, through historic process under Divine guidance, has come to all devout disciples of the One Lord. But, under this guidance, the practical step to be taken by us to-day is toward an autonomous national Church. It is the ecclesiastical problem of the country. It is a longing of every Christian heart.

#### NOTE 2

In insisting upon grace and rhythm and harmony as characteristic of the well trained mind Plato says:

"This being the case ought we to compel only our poets to impress on their productions the likeness of a good moral character? Or ought we not to extend our superintendence to the professors of every other craft,



and forbid them to impress those signs of an evil nature, of dissoluteness, of meanness and of ungracefulness, either on the likenesses of living creatures or on buildings, or on any other work of their hands? Should we not interdict all who cannot do otherwise from working in our city, so that our guardians may not be reared amongst images of vice, as upon unwholesome pastures, culling much every day, little by little from many places, until they insensibly get a large mass of evil in their inmost souls? Ought we not then, rather, seek out artists of another stamp, who by the power of their genius can trace out the nature of the beautiful and the graceful, that our young men, dwelling as it were in a healthful region, may drink in good from all their surroundings, whence any emanation from noble works may strike upon their eye or ear, like a gale wafting health from salubrious lands, and thus win them, imperceptibly, from their earliest childhood into resemblance, love and harmony with the true beauty of reason."<sup>1</sup>

Again noting the care of dyers to get the true sea-purple and make it indelible, he says: "You may see from this illustration what we mean by giving our guardians the best education in music and gymnastic. Imagine that we were only contriving how they might best be influenced to take as it were the *color of the laws*, in order that their opinion on all subjects might be indelible, owing to their congenial nature and appropriate education, and that their color might not be washed out by such terribly efficacious detergents as pleasure and pain and fear and desire, which are more potent to bleach, than any nitre or lye or any other solvent in the world."<sup>2</sup>

### NOTE 3

"I believe," says Comte, "that I have discovered the law of development exhibited by the human intelligence in its diverse spheres of activity. . . . The law is this: that each of our main conceptions, each branch of knowledge, passes in succession through three distinct stages—the theological or imaginative stage, the metaphysical or abstract, and the scientific or positive. . . . In the theological stage, the human mind seeks to discover the inner nature of things, the first and final cause of all the effects which strike the senses: in short it aims at absolute knowledge, and regards phenomena as due to the direct and continuous activity of supernatural beings, more or less numerous, whose arbitrary intervention explains all the apparent anomalies of the Universe.

"In the metaphysical stage, which is at bottom merely a modification of the theological, for supernatural agents there are substituted abstract

<sup>1</sup> *The Republic*, Bk. III, 401. B.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Bk. IV. 429-430.



forces, entities or personified abstractions, supposed to be inherent in different classes of things, and to be capable of producing by themselves, all the phenomena we observe. The mode of explanation at this stage, therefore, consists in assigning for each class a correspondent entity.

"Lastly in the positive stage, the human mind, recognizing the impossibility of gaining absolute conceptions of things, gives up the search after the origin and destiny of the Universe and the inner causes of phenomena, and limits itself to the task of finding out, by means of experience, combined with reflection and observation, the laws of phenomena, *i. e.*, their invariable relations of similarity and succession. The explanation of facts, reduced to its simplest terms, is now regarded as simply the connection which subsists between diverse particular phenomena and certain general facts, the number of which is continually reduced with the progress of science.

"The theological reaches its greatest perfection when it substitutes the providential action of a single being for the numerous independent divinities imagined to be at work in primitive times. Similarly, the highest point reached by the metaphysical system consists in conceiving, instead of a number of particular entities, a single great entity, called Nature, which is viewed as the sole source of all phenomena. So also the perfection of the positive system, a perfection towards which it continually tends, but which it is highly probable it will never quite reach, would consist in being able to represent all observed phenomena, as particular instances of a single general fact, such as the fact of gravitation.

"We thus see that the essential character of *positive* philosophy is to regard all phenomena as subject to invariable laws. . . . What is called *causes*—whether these are first or final causes—are absolutely inaccessible and the search for them a vain one. . . . What attraction and weight are in themselves, we cannot possibly tell."

#### NOTE 4

"*A Candid Examination of Theism*" by *Physicus*. (Geo. Romanes, 1878), written when the author's thought was dominated by the categories of mechanical physics.

The legend prefixed is: "Cans't thou by searching find out God?" The answer, obtained by an examination of the arguments for the existence of God from the standpoint of physical science is, No. The last paragraph of his examination of their proofs should I think be read by everyone in this day of the dominance—half understood by most of those who accept it—of the merely scientific view of the universe.

Regarding the negative conclusion reached, Prof. Romanes says:

"It is therefore with the utmost sorrow that I find myself compelled

to accept the conclusions here worked out." Then premising the possibly disastrous tendency of his work, he adds: "So far as I am individually concerned . . . it becomes my duty to stifle all belief of the kind which I conceive to be the noblest and to discipline my intellect with regard to this matter into an attitude of purest scepticism. And forasmuch as I am far from being able to agree with those who affirm that the twilight doctrine of the "new faith" is a desirable substitute for the waning splendor of "the old," I am not ashamed to confess that with this virtual negation of God, the Universe to me has lost its soul of loveliness; and although from henceforth the precept to "work while it is day" will doubtless but gain an intensified force from the terribly intensified meaning of the words "the night cometh when no man can work," yet when at times I think, as think at times I must, of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it—at such times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible. For whether it be due to my intelligence not being sufficiently advanced to meet the requirements of the age, or whether it be due to the memory of those hallowed associations which to me, at least, were the sweetest that life has given, I cannot but feel that for me and for others who think as I do, there is a dreadful truth in those words of Hamilton—Philosophy having become a mediation, not merely of death, but of annihilation, the precept *know thyself* has become transformed into the terrific oracle of Oedipus—"Mayest thou ne'er know the truth of what thou art."

Reference should, however, be made to a posthumous volume of Romanes,<sup>1</sup> in which Romanes gives the processes of his ripening experience that led him back to the Christian faith. One of the chapters is entitled, "A Candid Examination of Religion," by *Metaphysicus*, as his earlier volume had been "*A Candid Examination of Theism*," by *Physicus*. He is still *Physicus*—a devoted student of physical science, accepting fully the mechanical theory and its results, yet he sees the limitations of the merely scientific world view forcing him from *physics* to metaphysics for a satisfactory world view. The volume is the candid personal confession of the way leading *Physicus* from the despair with which closed his first volume.

Bishop Gore at the close of the volume says:

"Georges Romanes came to recognize, as in these written notes so also in conversation, that it was 'reasonable to be a Christian believer' even before the activity or habit of faith had been recovered. His life was cut short very soon after this point was reached; but it will surprise no one to learn that the writer of these '*Thoughts*' returned, before his death,

<sup>1</sup> *Thoughts on Religion*. Edited by the Rt. Rev. Charles Gore.

to that full, deliberate communion with the Church of Jesus Christ, which he had for so many years been conscientiously compelled to forego. In his case, 'the pure in heart' was, after a long period of darkness allowed, in a measure before his death, to 'see God.'"

*Fecisti nos ad te, Domine; et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te.*

## NOTE 5

Pragmatism has lately been proclaimed as a new method in Philosophy. It is a revolt against the intellectual interpretation of experience given by the Catholic philosophy of the ages in favor of a practical interpretation. It seems to be but an extension of the *worth-judgments* (*Werturteile*) of the Ritschlians to the field of all knowledge. Or we might put it that it is the bodily subsumption of the whole principles of knowing or existential judgments of Kant's *First Critique*, under the heuristic principles of his *Third Critique* and of his moral judgment of the *Second Critique*. It only carries the agnosticism of those who deny the possibility of knowledge of non-sensuous experience to the full swing of the circle and denies it *in toto*. Or rather, as it claims to be a certain sort of knowledge; it maintains that all our knowledge consists of practical teleological judgments, whether in mathematics and physics or in morality and religion. Indeed it seems that the same moral dread of positive science, as subversive of the individual and his spiritual possessions, inspires the pragmatists that lead to Ritschl's use of *Werturteile*. This is notably so in the case of Professor Howison.<sup>1</sup> It is equally so in Professor James' volume.<sup>2</sup> In Professor F. C. S. Schiller's volume,<sup>3</sup> the *animus*, seems to be a revolt against the regnant Idealism developed from the Kantian standpoint. In the volume of essays, by eight Oxford men,<sup>4</sup> the religious and moral interests seem to be at the bottom of their contention against the intellectualism of both science and philosophy. In the volume of Professor Dewey<sup>5</sup> pragmatism is used rather as a method of studying the genetic process of intellectual judgments, than as wholly new method in Philosophy. What now is the fundamental principle of this extravagantly vaunted new theory that is styled pragmatism? As one reads most of these volumes, he becomes dazed and bewildered and ends with very vague ideas of what the thing really means. Two things however are clear. First these pragmatists give us to understand that truth as an objective system—truth, the search for which has been the

<sup>1</sup> *The Limits of Evolution and Other Essays*, 1901.

<sup>2</sup> *The Will to Believe and Other Essays*.

<sup>3</sup> *Humanism, Philosophical Essays*, 1903.

<sup>4</sup> *Personal Idealism*.

<sup>5</sup> *Studies in Logical Theory*, by John Dewey and others.

object of all science and philosophy, is a mere cob-web of the intellect. Second, that all our judgments of reality are *worth* or *value-judgments*. What is called truth and reality consist in bare practical effects. In science, for instance, if it serves our practical purposes better to use the Ptolomaic instead of the Copernican theory in astronomy then it is the true and real for us. In morals, if honesty is the best policy, then honesty is the truth. In philosophy, if we can get more out of our moral and religious life by believing in polytheism instead of monotheism, then polytheism is the truth, which is practically the view of Professor Howison and Professor James and Professor Schiller. Any affirmed truth that does not subserve practice is no truth. The modicum of truth in this last statement is however perverted, by an illogical conversion of premises, into the statement which is the main working view of pragmatism, that only what is practical is true. The corollary follows, let us test all affirmed truths by their cash value. What is the practical cash value to us of any supposed truth in science as well as in philosophy and religion? Mental arithmetic becomes at best a moral arithmetic. The *cui bono* scales are to give us the validity of judgments in all spheres. Reasonableness or truth is not a good in itself. It is an abstraction. The only truth is goodness, *i. e.*, that which is good for some practical purpose. There is no truth, no absolute system of truth independent of the needs of men. Love of such supposed truth, which has always been the inspiration of thinkers, is rudely taken from us as the worship of a false God. Such truth is useless, and the useless is the false. There is no determinate nature of reality, either physical, for science or metaphysical, for philosophy. True truth is the judgment that works, accomplishes something beneficent for man. A mathematician who discovered a new formula and said that while it was absolutely demonstrable, the best thing about it was that it could never by any possibility be of any use to anybody. The pragmatist would say that he and all intellectualists were excrescences on real humanity. Logic, too, of course, is dismissed in favor of working theories that produce what meets men's needs.

We can say that what is true in pragmatism is not new, and what is new in it—the attempt to substitute value-judgments in all cognition for judgments of truth and reality—is not true.

#### NOTE 6

This letter of the Archbishop of Paris, founded upon a communication from the Pope, that the supreme tribunal of the holy office had formally condemned the works of the Abbé Loisy, thus concludes:

" . . . Considering, first, that it has been published without the *imprimatur* demanded by the laws of the Church;

"Second, that it is of such a nature as to seriously trouble the faith of the faithful upon the fundamental dogmas of the Catholic teaching, notably concerning the authority of the Scripture and of tradition, the Divinity of Christ and His infallible knowledge, the redemption accomplished by His death, the doctrines of the resurrection, the Eucharist and the divine institution of the sovereign pontificate and episcopate;

"We reprobate the book and interdict the reading of it by the clergy and the faithful of our diocese.

"Paris, January 17, 1903

"FRANÇOIS CARDINAL RICHARD,  
"Archbishop of Paris."

The Archbishop of Nancy in writing of the method of Abbé Loisy says that it is neither Catholic, nor Christian, nor historical, nor critical, nor theological, nor scientific, nor loyal.

#### NOTE 7

"The masters of those who know," in both philosophy and science, fully recognize the limitations of their work, and also recognize the mass of rather worthless stuff that oftentimes parades itself under the guise of philosophy or of science.

For a frank statement to this effect from masters in science I refer to the *Method for Promoting Research in the Exact Sciences*, published in the *Year Book of the Carnegie Institution of Washington*, 1904. It contains letters from six distinguished men of science in reply to a letter of Professor *Simon Newcomb*, soliciting opinions as to the best method of promoting the work of the Carnegie Institution in Research Work. Dr. Newcomb's letter itself is admirable. I give only a quotation from the letter of *Karl Pearson*, of the *University College*, London, England:

"1. I agree absolutely with Professor Newcomb's first statement that the nineteenth century has industriously piled together a vast mass of astronomical, physical, and biological data, and that very little use has hitherto been made of this material. The reason for this I take to be that a man of mediocre ability can observe and collect facts, but it takes the exceptional man of great logical power and control of method to draw legitimate conclusions from them.

"2. Differing probably from Professor Newcomb, I hold that at least 50 per cent. of the observations made and the data collected are worthless, and no man, however able, could deduce any result from them at all. In engineer's language, we need to "scrap" about 50 per cent. of the products of nineteenth century science. The scientific journals teem



with papers that are of no real value at all. They record observations which cannot be made of service by any one, however able, because they have not been undertaken with a due regard to the safeguards which a man takes who makes observations with the view of testing a theory of his own. In other cases the collector or observer is hopelessly ignorant of the conditions under which alone accurate work can be done. He 'piles up' observations and data because he sees other men doing it and because that is supposed to be scientific work."

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